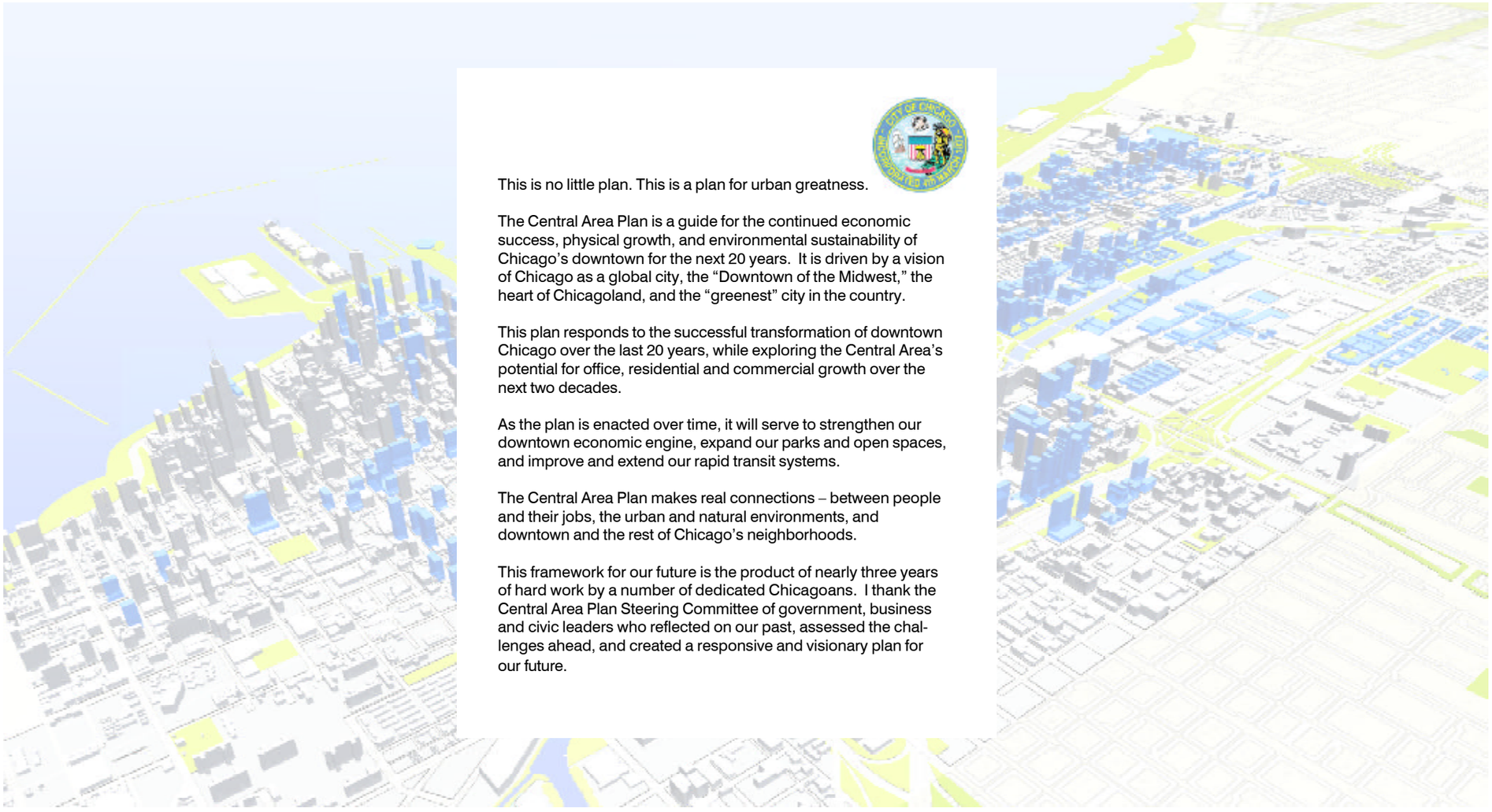
The Chicago Central Area Plan

Preparing the Central City for the 21st Century

Draft Final Report to the Chicago Plan Commission

May 2003



This is no little plan. This is a plan for urban greatness.

The Central Area Plan is a guide for the continued economic success, physical growth, and environmental sustainability of Chicago's downtown for the next 20 years. It is driven by a vision of Chicago as a global city, the "Downtown of the Midwest," the heart of Chicagoland, and the "greenest" city in the country.

This plan responds to the successful transformation of downtown Chicago over the last 20 years, while exploring the Central Area's potential for office, residential and commercial growth over the next two decades.

As the plan is enacted over time, it will serve to strengthen our downtown economic engine, expand our parks and open spaces, and improve and extend our rapid transit systems.

The Central Area Plan makes real connections – between people and their jobs, the urban and natural environments, and downtown and the rest of Chicago's neighborhoods.

This framework for our future is the product of nearly three years of hard work by a number of dedicated Chicagoans. I thank the Central Area Plan Steering Committee of government, business and civic leaders who reflected on our past, assessed the challenges ahead, and created a responsive and visionary plan for our future.

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Draft Final Report to the Chicago Plan Commission

May 2003

Prepared by
The City of Chicago
Department of Planning and Development
Department of Transportation
Department of Environment

Preface

This is no little plan. This is a plan for urban greatness, as measured by the pride, prosperity and quality of life of Chicago's people. This is a plan to expand downtown's economic engine, which generates revenue for civic improvements in every ward and jobs to support families in every neighborhood. This is a green plan to enhance the state's fastest growing residential community and the metropolitan region's shared cultural treasures. This is a plan that advances Chicago’s historic commitment to build the world's greatest city. This is no little plan.

Only two of America's big cities enjoy the benefits of having commerce concentrated downtown, but only Chicago has room to grow. And grow it shall, as the City in a Garden remains a work in progress. Chicago has historically and uniquely fused the green of environmental enhancement with the aesthetic of architectural statement, to create a central area that invites all its people to come together as one to work, shop, live and play.

Growth means "more," and more needs managing. Managing more commuters, more buildings, more residences, more visitors. At this huge scale good management requires bold ideas brilliantly executed. Doing this kind of confident, visionary city-building for the benefit of all our people has exemplified the spirit of Chicago in each of its preceding five generations.

This generation faces a moment of destiny in which we shall either stride boldly to the forefront of the world's great cities, or begin an inexorable decline into the company of the also-rans. Ultimately we will measure our success in the health and happiness of life in the neighborhoods, one family at a time. But let us be clear that it is a healthy, vital and prospering central area that provides a necessary economic underpinning for our aspirations.

We believe that the people of Chicago take pride in their downtown. Indeed, we believe that they love it. This is a plan for them, for us. It is a plan that captures and leverages Chicago's emerging leadership across a broad front of city-building initiatives. This is no dream, but a blueprint. This is not a concept, but an inventory of specifics to be executed over time.

This is no little plan. Let's go build Chicago together, as we have always done - according to plan.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary i
CHICAGO'S CENTRAL AREA IN 2020

Chapter 1 1
GREAT PLANS FOR A GREAT CITY

Chapter 2 9
THE PHYSICAL AND ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Physical Features of the Central Area 11

Economic Assessment and Sector Analyses 15

Opportunities for Growth 31

Chapter 3 33
VISION AND GUIDING THEMES

The Vision 35

The Guiding Themes 37

Green Chicago: A Commitment to the Environment 39

Chapter 4 41
THE PLAN

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK 44

TRANSPORTATION 55
Transit
The Pedestrian Environment
Traffic and Parking
Alternative Modes of Transportation
Regional Transportation Projects

WATERFRONTS AND OPEN SPACES 79

The Lakefront
The Chicago Riverfront
Neighborhood Parks and Plazas
Green Streets and Infrastructure

Chapter 5 109
DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

THE EXPANDED LOOP 113

THE NEAR NORTH 121

THE SOUTH LOOP AND THE NEAR SOUTH SIDE 125

Chapter 6 137
IMPLEMENTATION

Overview
Implementation Tools
Development Controls
Transportation
Open Space
Environmental Committment

Appendix 1: Task Force Summaries 147

Acknowledgments and List of Illustrations 155

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chicago’s Central Area in 2020

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Chicago's Central Area in 2020

The Vision

Chicago's Central Area in 2020 will be known worldwide as a beautiful, dynamic urban center that is the hub of business, higher education and culture for its region. It will have the greenest downtown in America, known for its outstanding lake and riverfront, parks and greenways, its exceptional public transportation, and for its policies promoting innovative architecture and environmentally-sustainable design and practices. It will be a vibrant, walkable, place where people work, live, play and celebrate. It will attract and serve people from every Chicago neighborhood, as well as visitors from around the nation and the world.

A Guide to Growth

Central Chicago is poised for dramatic growth with billions of dollars in economic benefits to the city, region and state. This growth, which is good for the city and smart for the region, can only be sustained if the Central Area builds on the special qualities that make it one of the world's greatest places to work, live and play. This plan is designed to guide this growth, taking advantage of the Central Area's strengths: its economic diversity, its central location, and its renowned quality of life.

Building on Success

The hub of a great region

Chicago will maintain its position as the vibrant business and transportation center of the Midwest, by concentrating growth in an expanded downtown commercial core, and continually improving transportation systems. Downtown growth benefits the region by maximizing return on infrastructure investment, and minimizing costly sprawl.

Business success depends on quality of life

Good planning is good business. The Central Area's vibrant mix of uses, transportation, walkable neighborhoods, open spaces, waterfronts, and design excellence, will continue to make downtown Chicago a great place to do business.

The best of the past is the foundation for the future

Building on Chicago's legacy of exceptional architecture and spectacular parks means preserving landmark buildings and districts, enhancing the lakefront and riverfront, creating new parks, and encouraging innovative new design that respects people and contributes to great street life.

Downtown is everyone's neighborhood

Downtown, one of the world's great urban places, belongs first and foremost to the people of Chicago. People from all neighborhoods and all walks of life will come together here to work, play, access services, shop, learn, and celebrate their rich cultural traditions.

A green city is a healthy city

Chicago will be the international model of a sustainable city. Its commitment to transit first, use of renewable power and green technologies, smart energy management, environmentally-sound building design, and attention to its open spaces and waterfronts, will make it the greenest city in America.

Extraordinary growth in every sector

The growth envisioned in this plan will bring more than $534 billion in economic benefits to the Chicago metropolitan area, with huge increases in tax revenues to the city and state. This growth will occur in all sectors throughout the Central Area.

The Economic Engine

Chicago is America's only big city that has room to grow its downtown commercial core. Downtown will attract more than 180,000 new jobs by 2020 - double the number of jobs presently in suburban Schaumburg, and equivalent to eight new Sears Towers.

Quality Living

By 2020, more than 140,000 residents will live in the Central Area – that's like adding the current population of Evanston, and represents a 69% increase. New development and adaptive reuse of existing buildings will lead to more than 36,000 new dwellings. Public and health care facilities will also expand to serve this growth.

Tourism and Culture

By 2020, 35 million conventioneers, tourists and other visitors will visit the Central Area annually. New attractions will include an expanded McCormick Place and more than 160,000 square feet of expanded museum and cultural facilities. Ten thousand new hotel rooms will be added to accommodate these additional visitors.

A Place to Learn: Higher Education

More than 95,000 students will attend the Central Area's institutions of higher learning by 2020. The addition of more than 3 million square feet of new classroom, dormitory and administrative space will enhance the vibrant mix of Central Area experiences.

The Marketplace: Retail

More residents, workers and visitors mean many more people shopping. By 2020 there will be more than more than 7 million square feet of new retail space in the Central Area. Although this will be mainly in lower floors of larger, mixed use buildings, some exclusively retail buildings may also be developed along State Street, Michigan Avenue, or Roosevelt and Canal.

Figure i
In 2020 Chicago will have an expanded central business district framed by green civic gateways including a park over the Kennedy Expressway.

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The Guiding Themes

Extraordinary growth requires extraordinary planning. The pace of business and residential development in the last two decades demonstrates that people want to be in the Central Area. This plan is designed to bring even more jobs and residents in the next 20 years.

Three guiding themes organize this plan:

Theme 1 - Development Framework
Direct growth to create a dynamic Central Area made up of vibrant and diverse mixed-use urban districts.

- Extend the highest density office core into the West Loop around transit stations, services and the Chicago River
- Develop high-density, mixed-use corridors which extend from the expanded Loop and are linked to transit
- Support a diverse collection of livable neighborhoods and special places
- Preserve and strengthen the Central Area's world-renowned architectural and cultural heritage
- Strengthen Industrial Corridors and Planned Manufacturing Districts
- Direct the growth of the Central Area's educational institutions and provide opportunities for lifelong learning
- Promote and strengthen the Central Area's world-class cultural assets

Theme 2 - Transportation
Strengthen connections to keep the Central Area easy to reach and get around.

- Make transit the first choice for people coming to the Central Area
- Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment
- Efficiently manage traffic circulation and parking to prevent gridlock
- Encourage alternative modes such as bicycles and water taxis
- Increase CTA and Metra capacity to bring workers to the Central Area.
- Improve national and international connections.

Theme 3 - *Waterfronts and Open Spaces*
Expand and connect waterfronts and open spaces to create great public places.

- Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space
- Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous open space system
- Create the next generation of urban and neighborhood parks to support the growing population
- Complete the Central Area's framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards

Connections for Successful Growth

To build on the qualities that make Central Chicago one of the best places in the world to do business, work, live, play, and learn, this plan emphasizes the connections between its three guiding themes. Connections mean that development, transportation, open space, and growth all build upon and support each other.

PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS
People from all parts of the region, the nation and the world will reach the Central Area easily, and move rapidly between its different districts. The plan envisions a city where people will be able to walk or bicycle along the waterfront all the way from Chinatown to North Avenue Beach. Chicago's workforce will be educated near centers of employment, and workers can choose to live near their jobs or reach them easily by public transit.

CONNECTING PEOPLE
The Central Area is a meeting place for people from all over Chicagoland, the nation and the world. It is the heart of a vibrant region, and one of the world's great crossroads. This plan is designed to keep Chicago connected to the world as a center of the global economy with an internationally-renowned quality of life.

The Plan

The following document is organized in 6 chapters.

- Chapters 1 and 2 provide background information about the context for planning and the process, and provide a detailed economic and physical assessment of the Central Area.
- Chapter 3 lays out the vision and three guiding themes of the plan, and sets the stage for Chicago to become the greenest city in America.
- Chapter 4 provides detail on the plan's three guiding themes: Development Framework; Transportation; and Waterfronts and Open Spaces.
- Chapter 5 outlines specific recommendations for the three major districts: the Expanded Loop; the South Loop and Near South; and the Near North. This chapter shows how the vision and guiding themes will shape these geographic areas.
- Chapter 6 outlines implementation strategies.
- Detailed recommendations from task forces on specific issues are included in an appendix.

CHAPTER 1

Great Plans for a Great City

Figure 1.1
South Michigan Avenue today

Figure 1.2
South Michigan Avenue will be one of many higher intensity, mixed-use corridors that will extend out from the Loop and form the centers of urban neighborhoods.

Great Plans for a Great City

This is an extraordinary time for Chicago's Central Area. Under the leadership of Mayor Richard M. Daley, Chicago's Central Area is experiencing dramatic growth. It is a turnaround based on the principle that successful downtowns must be dynamic and people friendly places. This transformation will continue in the coming decades, only if we carefully plan today with a vision that supports best practices and ensures Chicago's quality of life.

Three Reasons to Expect Growth

The 43.5 million square feet of new office space constructed in downtown Chicago between 1980 and 2002 was equivalent to the entire metropolitan inventory of Phoenix or St. Louis. Chicago's underlying economic strength suggests that the pace of growth will continue. The city that began as the hub of the nation's inland waterways, then became its principal hub for the railroads and then the airlines, is now a hub for the nation's fiber optic network. As a hub, Chicago remains an excellent place to do business. Although fluctuations have occurred from year to year, the city's commercial core has grown at a remarkable pace since 1980, adding 43.5 million square feet of office space. With thoughtful planning and judicious public investment there is every reason to expect sustained growth.

The second reason to expect growth is Chicago's central location and economic diversity. Today, the Central Area is a diverse mix of office towers, residential districts, world famous shopping, convention centers, entertainment, tourism, and industry. This diversity, and a mid-continent location, has kept the Central Area, and the Chicago Region, strong in increasingly competitive national and international markets where quality is key.

Finally, Chicago's Central Area will grow because people want to be here. Since 1980, more than 23,000 new homes meant the Chicago added more downtown residents than any other American city. People from around the region, nation and the globe will continue to make business, career and life decisions that enable them to be here.

The Purpose of the Plan

The Central Area Plan is the City of Chicago's response to the continuing transformation of central Chicago. It details the Central Area's potential as well as the obstacles to growth, and provides a blueprint for essential change. It crafts this vision with a "greener", more environmentally sustainable Central Area as an overarching theme.

To a greater degree than perhaps any other U.S. city, Chicago has benefited from an enlightened planning partnership between the public and private sectors. Burnham and Bennett's famous 1909 Plan of Chicago began the transformation of Chicago from "hog butcher to the world" to a city with international standing for the quality of its civic realm. Subsequent plans have been as important in creating some of the most admired features of the city we know today.

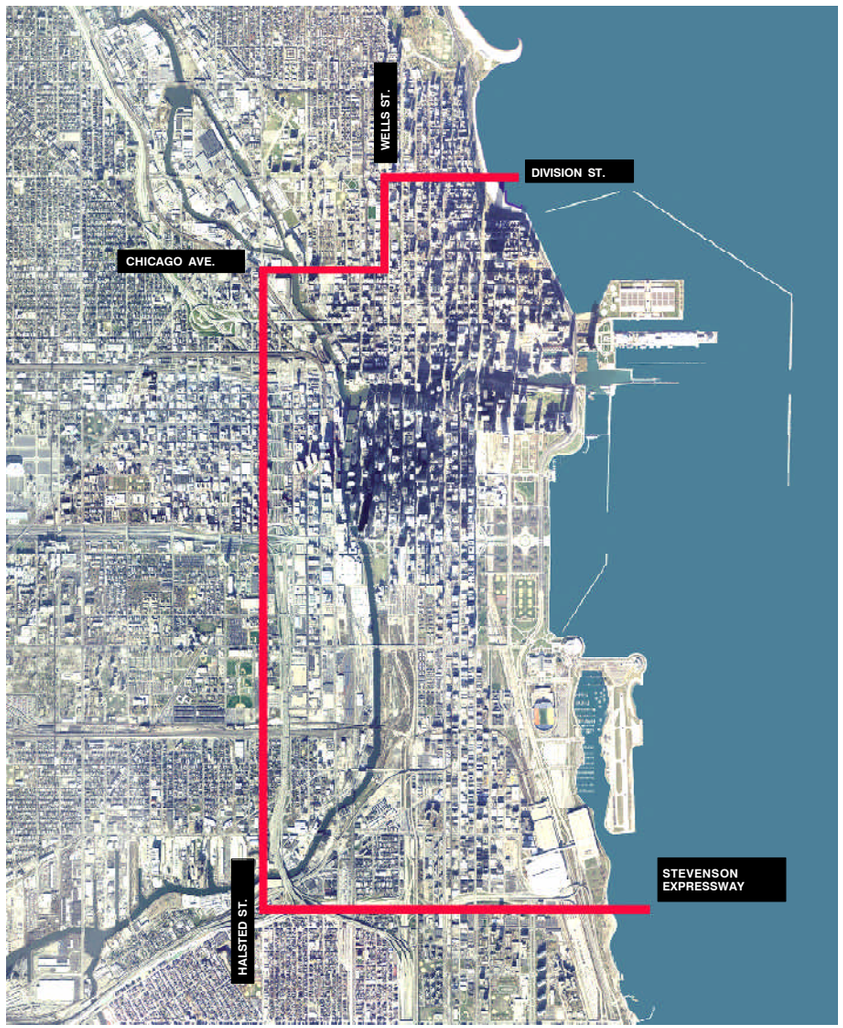
This Plan is offered in the same spirit. A great deal has been accomplished, but there is much more work to be done if the Central Area's growth, quality of life, and commitment to preserving the best of its history are to be maintained and balanced. This Plan is the next step in Chicago's future.

Figure 1.3 The Central Area of Chicago

The Central Area represents 107 million square feet (sf) of office, 9 million sf of retail, and 56,000 residential units.

By 2020, the Central Area will see an additional 30 to 40 million sf of office, 5 to 7 million sf of retail and 40,000 additional residential units.

In 20 years, the residential population of the Central Area may exceed 150,000 people. This is more people than currently live in any Illinois city except Rockford.



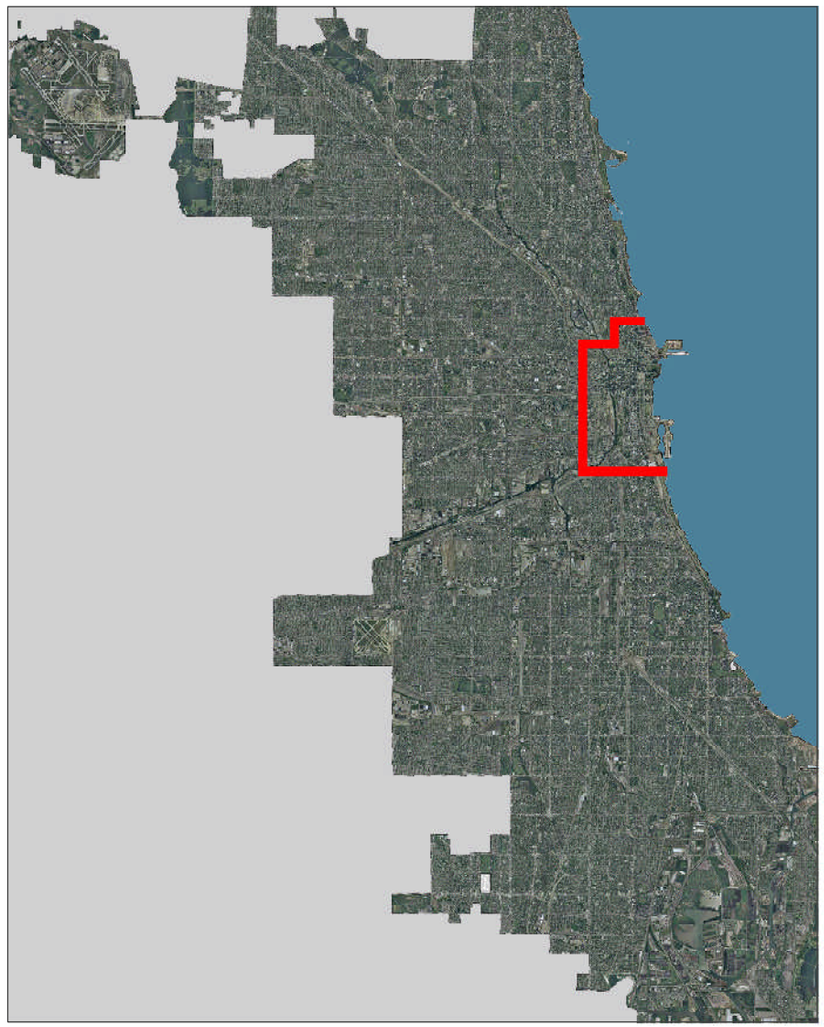


Figure 1.4
The Central Area makes up 2% of the City of Chicago. It is the hub for public transit and the region's expressways.

The Planning Process

Initiated by Mayor Richard M. Daley, the Central Area Plan is the product of over two years of discussion and reflection by a broad group of dedicated Chicagoans. Mayor Daley assembled a Steering Committee of 24 business and civic leaders to assess the challenges ahead and create a responsive and visionary plan. The Central Area Plan is the result of the Committee's work and extensive input from seven task forces.

The City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, in consultation with the Department of Transportation, provided direction for the project and coordinated the development of the plan with other government agencies such as the Department of the Environment and the Chicago Transit Authority.

The project was overseen by a 24-member Steering Committee. Seven Task Forces assessed the challenges and opportunities faced by key Central Area development sectors. Major stakeholders in the public and private sectors were consulted throughout the planning process.

A preliminary draft of this report was released in July 2002, and people from throughout Chicago provided comments at public meetings. The Department of Planning and Development worked with the Steering Committee through the spring of 2003 to integrate public comments into this final document.

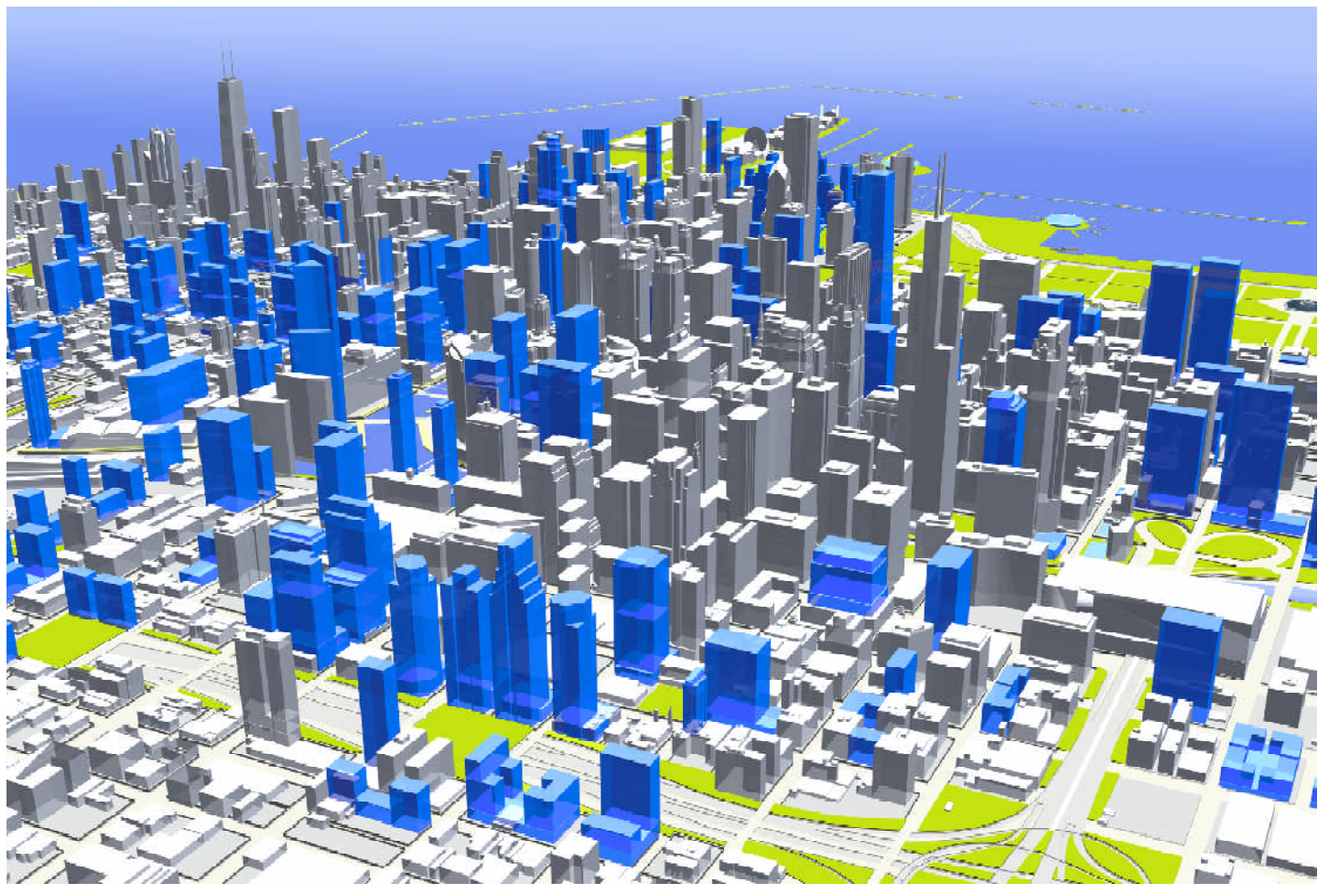


Figure 1.5
The Central Area in 2020 will continue to focus its downtown office core in the Central Loop. Expansion of the central business district west to the Kennedy Expressway will keep the office core compact, walkable and accessible by public transportation.

Past Plans

Chicago's tradition of private and public sectors coming together to create and implement plans sets it apart from other U.S. cities. The following are some highlights of Chicago's past Central Area plans.

The Plan of Chicago (1909)

The Commercial Club
Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett

A call to "make no small plans," this plan marked the beginning of modern urban planning. It revolutionized urban design and established an agenda that still shapes Chicago to this day.

Initiatives:

- The Lakefront Park system and Lake Shore Drive
- Navy Pier
- The Shoreline Islands
- Soldier Field
- North Michigan Avenue and the Michigan Avenue Bridge
- Wacker Drive
- Congress Parkway

Development Plan for the Central Area of Chicago (1958)

Chicago Department of City Planning

A municipal plan addressing land use, public buildings, pedestrian environments, transit and transportation for "the economic betterment, comfort and general welfare of the people."

Initiatives:

- The Federal Center Complex on Dearborn Street
- The Daley Civic Center and Daley Plaza
- McCormick Place
- Illinois Center
- University of Illinois at Chicago
- Stevenson Expressway Connection to Lake Shore Drive
- Oak Street and Ohio Street Beaches

Chicago 21: A Plan for the Central Area Communities (1973)

Chicago Central Area Committee and the City of Chicago

A plan that sought to "restore the historic role of the center city and to preserve what is unique about Chicago".

Initiatives:

- Dearborn Park (the South Loop New Town)
- North Loop Redevelopment
- Redevelopment of Ogden Slip
- Reactivation of Navy Pier
- Extension of the "L" to O'Hare International Airport
- Extension of Columbus Drive over the Chicago River
- Extension of Wacker Drive to Lake Shore Drive
- Extension of the Pedway

Chicago Central Area Plan: A Plan for the Heart of the City (1983)

Chicago Central Area Committee and the City of Chicago

This private sector plan responded to the "pressing needs of the city and the trends which are transforming it".

Initiatives:

- Creation of the Museum Campus
- Expansion of McCormick Place
- Relocation of Lakeshore Drive
- Extension of Roosevelt Road to the East
- Lakefront Gardens (Millennium Gardens)
- Streetscaping of Wacker Drive, Congress Parkway, LaSalle Street and Michigan Avenue
- West Loop Development

Current Planning within Chicago's Central Area

Finer-scale enhancements to, and preservation measures for, specific communities within the Central Area are treated more fully in district-level plans. District plans recently completed or currently in development include:

- The Near North Redevelopment Initiative (1997) - focuses on Cabrini North Extension
- River North Urban Design Plan (1987)
- A Plan for Chicago's Near Northwest Side (2002 - includes Fulton River District)
- Lakeshore East Design Guidelines (2000)
- East Loop – Vision for Greater State Street: Next Steps (1997);
- A Vision for State Street, Wabash Avenue and Michigan Avenue (2000)
- Near West Side Plan (1999)
- Near South Plan (in progress)
- Chicago River Design Guidelines/Downtown Corridor (1990); Chicago River Corridor Development Plan (1999); Chicago River Corridor Design Guidelines (1999)
- Grant Park Framework Plan (2002)
- Planning Principles for Chicago's Central Area (1991).

Regional Planning Initiatives

As we move forward in the 21st Century, a comprehensive view of how the region will grow is critical.

The Central Area Plan is based on a core belief that directing growth to the historic center of the region will: limit sprawl at the regional fringe; protect regional open space; enable the greatest number of people to commute on transit; maximize the value of existing infrastructure and improve the environmental quality of the region. The Central Area plan is consistent with and bolsters two recent regional planning initiatives.

METROPOLIS 2020

In 2003, Chicago Metropolis 2020, a nonprofit organization created by the Commercial Club of Chicago, released *The Metropolis Plan: Choices for the Chicago Region*. Based on sophisticated computer models and extensive participation of community leaders, the plan for the six-county metropolitan region contrasts "business as usual" with a new prescription for healthier growth. It illustrates the benefits of linking land use and transportation for the health and vitality of the region. Its calls for a region where we:

- Spend less time in traffic
- Live nearer to our jobs
- Protect more open space and environmentally sensitive areas
- Build communities that are friendlier to walking and biking – and therefore healthier for the people who live in them
- Make economic opportunity available to more of our region's residents.

To accomplish this vision *The Metropolis Plan* recommends that we:

- Coordinate land use and transportation plans and investments
- Create a broader range of housing options
- Rebuild and redevelop existing communities, ensure adequate affordable housing near jobs and transit, and promote economic growth in communities facing economic hardship
- Ensure that the Chicago region remains a preeminent national and international hub for freight transportation
- Design communities that are friendly to walking, biking and the use of public transit.
- Protect natural areas, open space and farmland

COMMON GROUND

The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission's (NIPC) Common Ground: A Blueprint for Regional Action initiative is engaging the region's citizens in a dialogue about the connection between shared natural resources, the transportation system and the economy. The aim is to create a clear picture of what Chicago and its surrounding counties will look like in 2050.

The City of Chicago will continue to work with Metropolis 2020, NIPC and other regional partners to implement our common vision.

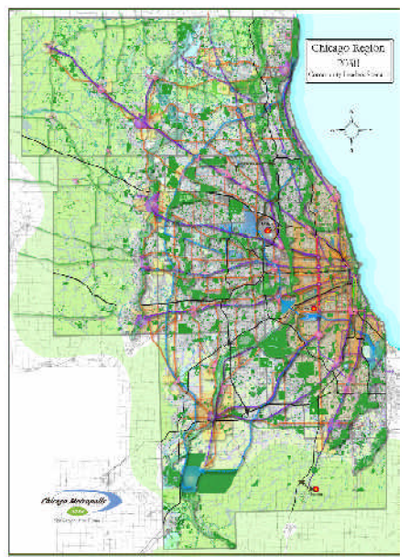


Figure 1.6
The Metropolis Plan for the region says, "a strong Chicago downtown is essential to our region's future."

CHAPTER 2

The Physical and Economic Assessment

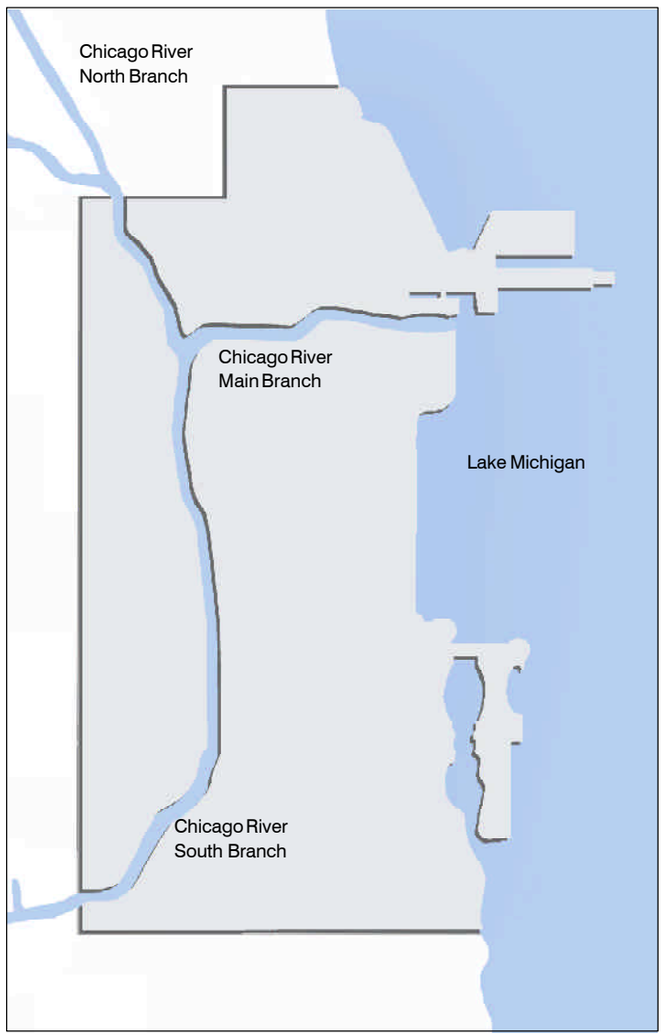


Figure 2.1 Natural Features - lake, river and land made Chicago a great city, and dictate its form.

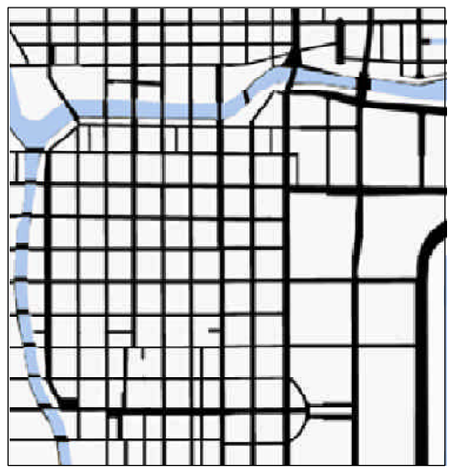


Figure 2.2 The Street Grid extending in all directions allows the downtown to be remarkably open and accessible.

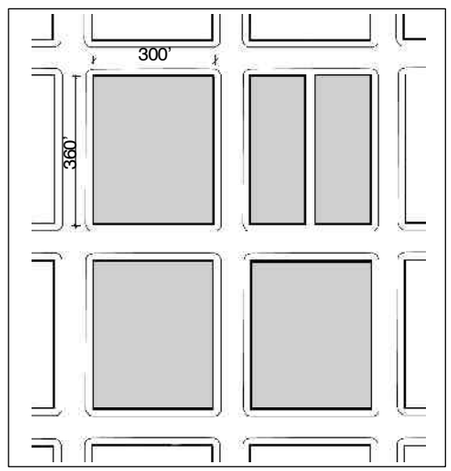


Figure 2.3 The typical block within the Central Area covers a little less than 3 acres and is bisected by alleys that improve circulation and separate uses.

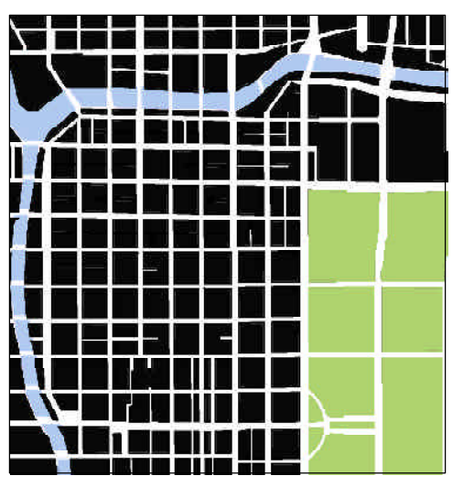


Figure 2.4 The Block Pattern organizes all development.

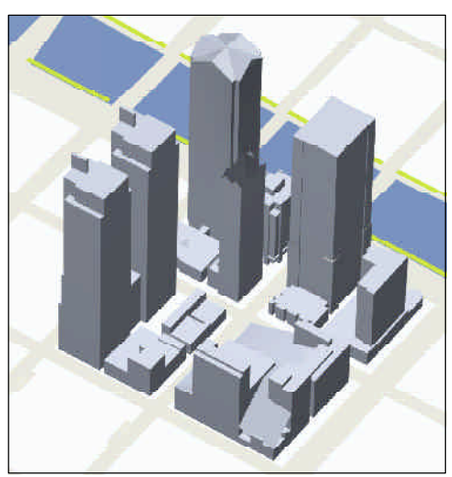


Figure 2.5 Density and diversity within each block contribute to Chicago's street level interest and its economic vitality.

The Defining Physical Features of Chicago's Central Area

Chicago gains its special character from the combination of its natural setting on Lake Michigan and the Chicago River, its density, cultural diversity, economic vitality, variety of uses and extraordinary architecture - both old and new.

NATURAL FEATURES: LAKE, RIVER AND LAND

People who live, work, or visit the Central Area of Chicago know that it is one of the world's great urban places. The form of the Central Area is part of what makes Chicago a great city. This compact, walkable city center has traditionally been defined by its natural features: Lake Michigan on the east and the Chicago River on the north and west. Lake Michigan and the Chicago River determined where Chicago began, and continue to define the heart of the city today.

Chicago's identity is inseparable from its magnificent lake edge, and the continuous and broad lakefront park system, built out beyond the original shoreline over the last century. This great civic amenity now distinguishes Chicago from any other city in the United States. The lakefront, its park system and its collections of cultural institutions and entertainment facilities comprise one of Chicago's most important assets.

Historically, the Chicago River has served as a transportation and industrial corridor. As we enter the 21st century, the Chicago River is becoming a new open space corridor for the city and the Central Area. Once the western boundary for the downtown, it now flows through the center of the downtown. This corridor can be the focus of a great new collection of open spaces and commercial venues linked by a continuous pedestrian connection. The Erie Street Terraces and Riverwalk Gateway stand as recent examples of the commitment to this natural feature's role as a civic place.

CITY FORM

The flatland topography of Chicago is rarely identified as a positive natural feature for the city. Unlike other cities like San Francisco or Boston, Chicago does not have a collection of hills to help distinguish and create its identity. However, this expansive flat topography has allowed the cluster of tall buildings to become Chicago's identity. The man made hills of tall office and residential buildings stand in stark relief to the extensive flatness of this prairie region and marks this important confluence of the Chicago River and Lake Michigan.

THE STREET GRID

The traditional street grid of Chicago is a strong contributor to the city's urban character. As it runs north, south, and west from the Central Area, the rigor of the street grid binds the city together over many potential barriers including the Chicago River, the expressways and the rail corridors. The major streets of the grid serve as a common ground for the city and its neighborhoods, used by all for commuting, business and living.

The grid offers multiple choices for travel routes, avoiding channeling vehicles and people onto a few high traffic, high congestion streets. Pedestrians, cars, bicycles, trucks, and public transit all share street space. The continuity of this grid system must be respected, maintained and strengthened to achieve the highest levels of accessibility.

The Central Area is a walkable central city. The grid plays an important role in providing the multiple pedestrian ways from transit stations to places of work, shopping, culture, entertainment and learning. Well-landscaped streets and boulevards have also turned the grid into an extension of the civic realm and are critical for achieving a pedestrian, walkable downtown.

Streets of special significance have become landmarks of the grid. LaSalle Street, State Street and Michigan Avenue are some of the great urban streets in America. There are also special streets that respond to the natural features of the Central Area such as Wacker Drive and Lake Shore Drive, each following the water's edge. As the Central Area continues to grow, shaping development to create great streets with special identities should be a high priority.

The collection of bascule bridges that begin at Lake Shore Drive and extend west, north and south along the branches of the Chicago River, distinguish Chicago from other cities in the world. These bridges are a reflection of a tremendous infrastructure commitment that is required to make this city work. They allow the street grid to extend continuously to the west and north. The collection of bridge designs, like Chicago's architectural landmarks, are a civic resource for the Central Area, adding to its beauty and attracting visitors.

Figure 2.6 Chicago's tradition of innovative architecture is world renowned.

Figure 2.7 Parks and open space make the Central Area liveable.

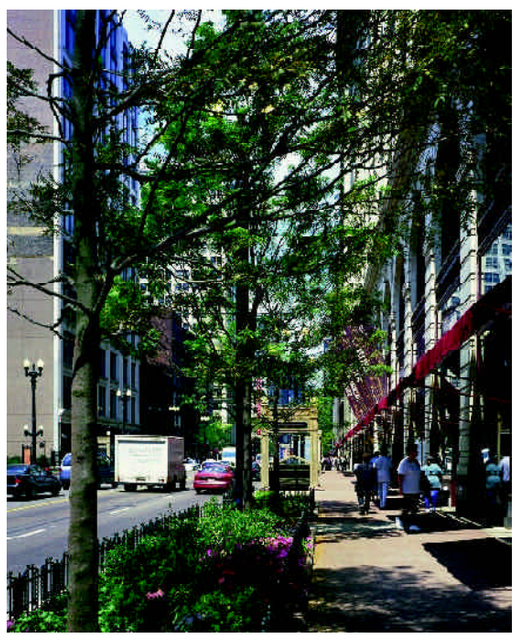
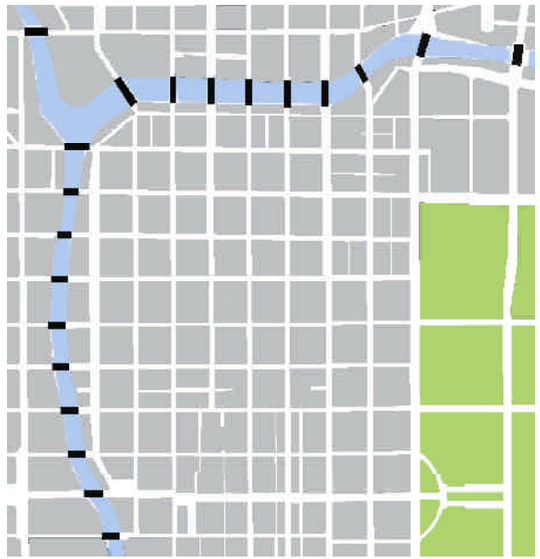


Figure 2.8 Great places and great streets are created by merging sidewalk design, active storefronts, distinctive architectural character and attractive landscaping.



Figures 2.9 and 2.10 Bascule bridges, like Chicago's architectural landmarks, are part of its unparalleled design heritage and legacy of engineering innovation.

THE BLOCK PATTERN

The block pattern within the Central Area is very consistent. Typically blocks are 360 feet north to south and 300 feet east to west, measuring a little under 3 acres. Blocks are frequently divided in half by an alley system that separates service areas from the public entries.

The block pattern organizes Chicago's diverse downtown buildings, both old and new. Buildings built up to the property line create the continuous street façade or wall we see on LaSalle Street, State Street and Michigan Avenue, emphasizing the street and the public realm.

The pattern of multiple buildings per block, built in a dense pattern, has been a Chicago tradition. However, some of Chicago's most significant buildings have taken a full block to create a distinguished building site and also an important public plaza. Daley Center, First National Plaza, John Hancock, and the Sears Building have each taken a full block. The Federal Center on Dearborn Street is an example of a special collection of buildings that also has taken a full block.

Chicago's street grid and block pattern combine to create important view corridors. While sometimes interrupted by the CTA's elevated structure, this has also become a signature of the Central Area. Chicago has been fortunate to avoid the collection of elevated pedestrian bridges that have blocked historic view corridors.

DENSITY AND DIVERSITY

The Central Area is defined by its density and diversity of uses. Downtown Chicago has a diverse mix of office towers, residential districts, world famous shopping districts, hotels, convention centers, entertainment and tourist destinations. The mix of uses in close proximity is a great asset, allowing the Central Area to be walkable. Density also allows transit to be feasible. The small, compact downtown of Chicago creates a multitude of special urban places of unique character. This density and diversity have kept downtown Chicago, and the region, strong in increasingly competitive national and international markets.

GREAT PLACES

Michigan Avenue, State Street, the Museum Campus, the Gallery District, the Jackson Loft District, Chinatown, Prairie Avenue and Streeterville are a few of the special places that give the Central Area its world famous character. Preserving the scale, density, architectural style, pedestrian interest and distinctive character of these districts is critical to maintaining Chicago’s exceptional quality of life.

INNOVATIVE ARCHITECTURE

Chicago is famous for its tradition of great architecture. Home to the Prairie and Chicago Schools of architecture, the first high rise, the mixed-use high rise, and some of the tallest buildings in the world, Chicago continues to promote a strong, innovative and progressive design community. The city’s guidelines and ordinances must continue to respect and preserve its great historic architecture while at the same time encouraging the design and development communities to create innovative new designs.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Chicago's park system is renowned throughout the world. The Central Area's lakefront is a legacy of past generations of leaders. More recently, the development of the Museum Campus and Millenium Park have enhanced the lakefront, as will the proposed new Art Institute gardens.

The Chicago River is also emerging as part of the Central Area's open space system. A mandatory open space setback and assembly of a continuous path is laying the foundation for a continuous riverwalk system through the city.

The water's edge is not the only place where downtown workers, visitors, and residents go to relax, exercise, and enjoy the outdoors. Central Area parks and plazas and its landscaped streets are also increasingly important parts of the Central Area's open-space network.

CONCLUSION

The view of the city from Lake Michigan, with Grant Park in the foreground, the Michigan Avenue streetwall behind, and skyscrapers beyond is an internationally recognized image of Chicago. The view did not emerge by accident. It was created as Chicagoans responded to the natural features of their home city and established precedents, rules, visions and plans for how to grow, organize and create their city. To ensure the future growth and quality of place of Chicago's Central Area the best of its physical attributes must be maintained, nurtured and strengthened.

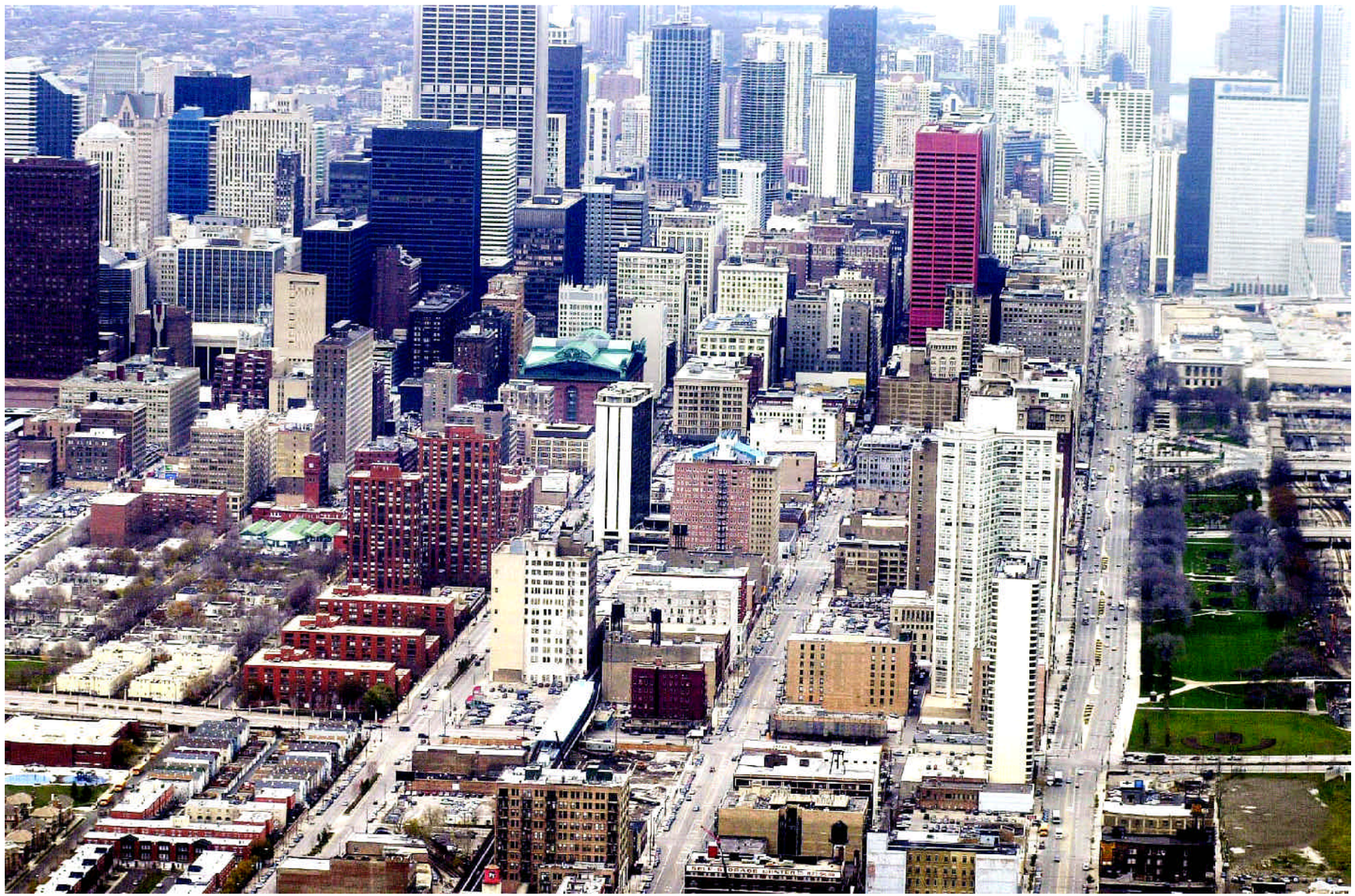


Figure 2.11
The East Loop and South Loop have seen remarkable changes in recent years.

Residential conversions, new residential development, cultural and academic institution expansion are transforming this historic portion of downtown into a diverse, lively urban environment.

The Economic Assessment

Great changes lie ahead. Chicago's Central Area is poised for significant new employment growth

In the past 20 years, growth has transformed the Central Area. The 43.5 million square feet of new office space constructed downtown between 1980 and 2000 was equivalent to the entire metropolitan inventory of Phoenix or St. Louis. Chicago added more downtown residents than any other American city, including New York. New neighborhoods stand on land formerly occupied by warehouses, railroad tracks and scrap yards. Loft buildings previously used for manufacturing and distribution serve as residences. Areas once dominated by parking lots are now new entertainment districts. Michigan Avenue has evolved into one of America's premier shopping streets, and State Street is again a great street, with nationally known department stores.

The transformation is not over. Hundreds of thousands of new jobs will be created in the Central Area by 2020 – or rather – they may be created, if the new workers can be provided with efficient transportation, a high quality work environment and places to live.

To establish the economic basis for the Plan, the Plan assesses each sector of the Central Area's economy and projects future growth. The sectors analyzed were:

- Office
- Residential
- Education
- Retail
- Convention/hotel
- Cultural
- Industrial

Annual demand for land per market sector through 2020 was estimated under both conservative and best-case assumptions. Quantitative analysis was supplemented with interviews and surveys. The following summaries are drawn from *Economic Base and Sector Analysis, Central Area, Chicago, Illinois 2000 – 2020*[1] . Except where otherwise stated, historical data is based on the period from 1980 to the present. "Base" is used to describe the conservative growth scenario, and "Opportunity" represents the best-case assumptions.

Table 2.1
Historic and Projected Growth, Chicago Central Area, 1980-2020[2]

Market Sectors	**1980**	**2000**	**Average Annual Increase**			**2020 Forecast - Increase**		**2020 Forecast - Total**	
			1980-2000	**Base**	**Opportunity**	**Base**	**Opportunity**	**Base**	**Opportunity**
Office (sq. ft.)	67,000,000	107,000,000	2,000,000	1,600,000	2,200,000	32,000,000	44,000,000	139,000,000	151,000,000
Retail (sq. ft.)	6,500,000	9,200,000	135,000	250,000	350,000	5,000,000	7,000,000	14,200,000	16,200,000
Residential (units)	33,500	56,600	1,155	1,800	2,200	36,000	44,000	93,000	101,000
Cultural (sq. ft.)	n/a	3,700,000	n/a	85,000	100,000	1,700,000	2,000,000	5,400,000	5,700,000
Convention (sq. ft.)	1,100,000	2,400,000	65,000	65,000	85,000	1,300,000	1,700,000	3,700,000	4,100,000
Education (sq. ft.)	2,000,000	9,000,000	350,000	150,000	200,000	3,000,000	4,000,000	12,000,000	13,000,000
Hotel (rooms)	21,000	27,000	300	600	700	12,000	14,000	39,000	41,000
Employment									
Office				7,800	10,700	156,000	214,000		
Retail				1,300	1,800	26,000	36,000		
Lodging				300	1,100	6,000	22,000		
TOTAL Employment		668,000		9,400	13,600	188,000	272,000	856,000	940,000
Transit Ridership									
Inbound Work Trips		588,000		8,300	12,000	166,000	240,000	753,000	827,000
Inbound Transit Trips		432,000							
Inbound Work Transit Trips		305,000		5,800	8,400	116,000	168,000	421,000	473,000
Residential Population	53,700	83,500		2,700	3,200	54,000	64,000	138,000	148,000

[1] Arthur Anderson LLP, Goodman Williams Group, Real Estate Planning Group, Susanne Cannon. 2001

[2] These projections do not include the health care sector, which is a growing service and employment sector in the Central Area. Information on the Central Area's major health care provider, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, can be found in chapter 5 in the Near North District.

Figure 2.12
The Near Northwest offers potential for high density residential neighborhoods and enhancing existing industrial areas.

Many of the rail easements offer potential for greenways extending from the Central Area to the West Side.

Employment

Central Area jobs will increase at a significantly higher rate than in the past

The key to understanding the forthcoming changes in the Central Area is the shifting nature of downtown employment. While more than 70 million square feet of office space was constructed between 1960 and the present, total employment in the Central Area has increased only modestly. What has changed dramatically is the mix of jobs. Chicago's Central Area was once a major industrial center, with rail yards, clothing factories, and printing plants. Over time, blue-collar employment declined while white-collar jobs rose. By far the largest employment increase was in services, where the number of jobs more than doubled between 1972 and 2000. The greatest losses were in manufacturing and wholesale trade, with employment in both categories dropping by more than two-thirds.

This transition in the Central Area workforce, in which gains and losses largely cancel out, will soon end. The two employment categories in continuing decline, manufacturing and wholesale trade, now account for less than 7% of the Central Area job base. It is likely that total Central Area employment will now climb at a significantly faster rate than in the past.

Projected growth: An additional 188,000 to 272,000 downtown workers are expected by 2020, an increase of 28 to 41%.

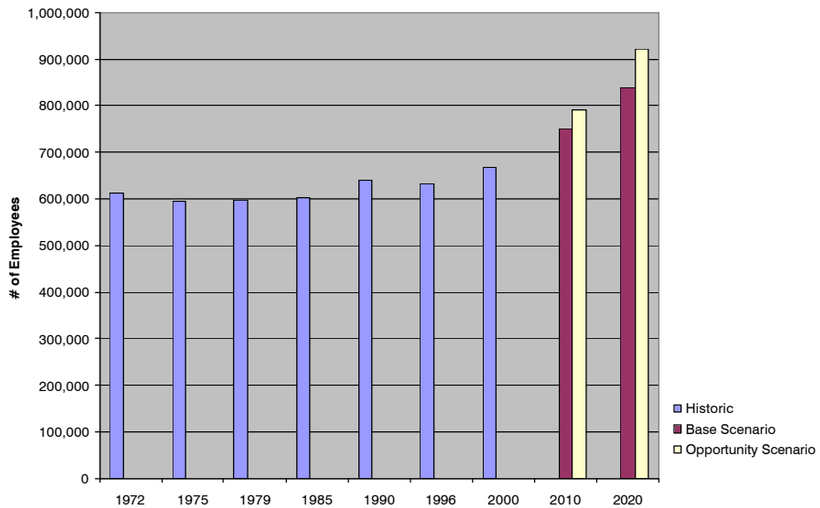


Table 2.2
Total Central Area Employment
1972-2020

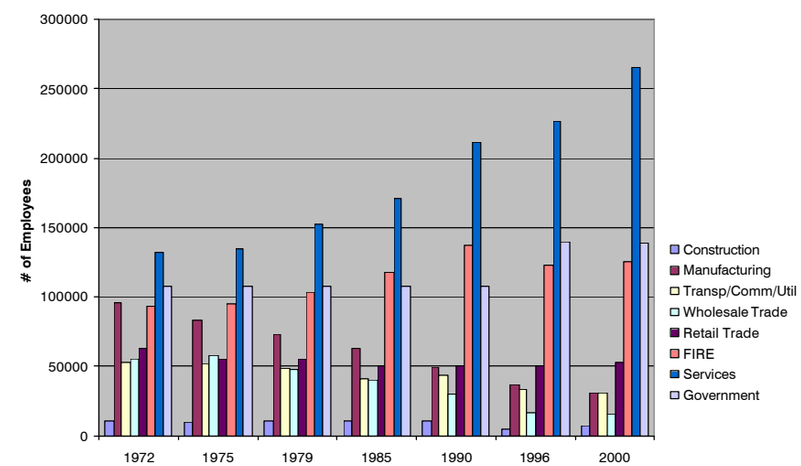


Table 2.3
Central Area Employment by Market Sector
1972-2000

While total employment has only increased modestly, the mix of jobs has changed dramatically. Manufacturing and wholesale trade have declined by two thirds, while service sector jobs have doubled.

Figure 2.13
Office Space, Chicago Central Business District, 1980-2020

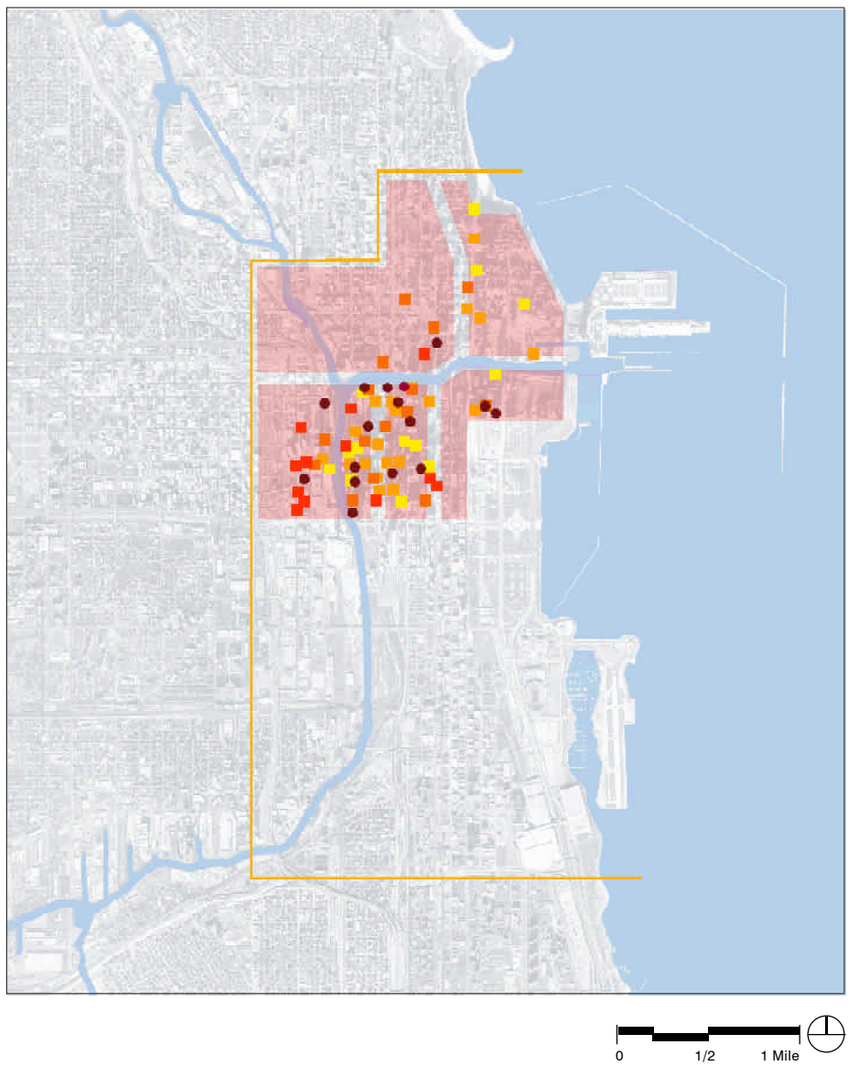
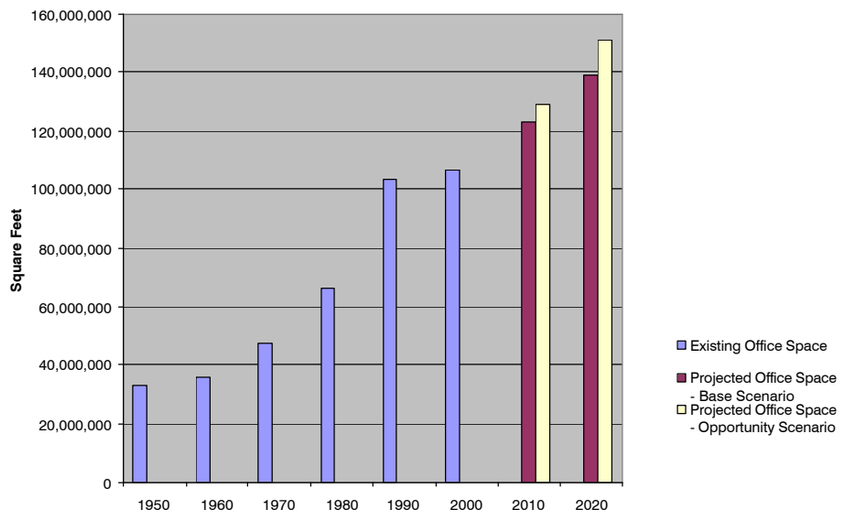


Table 2.4
Central Area Office Development,1950-2020
Chicago has approximately 50% of the metropolitan region's office space.



The type of office development analyzed here consists of investment-grade Class A, B, and C buildings. The letter classifications indicate building quality and generally correspond to a structure's age and amenities.

The Economic Engine: The Office Sector

There will be strong demand for new office space in the Central Area

GAINS IN OFFICE SPACE

Between 1980 and 2000 more than 40 million square feet of office space was built in the Central Area, substantially exceeding the entire downtown inventory in 1960. Despite the strong gain, the market experienced the boom-and-bust cycle typical of speculative office development. Between 1985 and 1989 an average of 3.2 million square feet of office space was constructed annually, the highest rate of construction in Chicago's history. No additional construction occurred until 1999, and then on only a small scale. From 2000 to 2002 eight new buildings added 6.3 million square feet. In 2002, the market again experienced vacancies and a slowdown in new projects in response to the increase in supply and national economic slowdown.

THE CENTRAL AREA'S REGIONAL SHARE

Central Area office space now totals nearly 107 million square feet – approximately 55% of total office space in metropolitan Chicago. Chicago's percentage of regional inventory is larger than that of any other major U.S. city except New York, with 62%.

Impressive though it is, Chicago's share of regional office development has declined in recent years to 40% of regional office absorption. Accordingly two forecasting scenarios were developed. The base scenario assumes that the Central Area will continue to capture 40% of new office demand in the metropolitan area, for an average annual increase of 1.6 million square feet through 2020. The opportunity scenario assumes a 50% capture rate for an average annual increase of 2.2 million square feet. The opportunity scenario also assumes that the major recommendations of this Plan, particularly the expansion of transit capacity, are implemented.

OFFICE GROWTH IS STRONGEST IN THE CENTRAL LOOP AND WEST LOOP

Since the majority of downtown workers use CTA rail and bus lines, which are concentrated in the Central Loop, many infill locations in that area will remain prime office sites. The majority of the projected office growth will occur in the Central Loop.

Although substantial office development occurred in most downtown sub-markets during the study period, the growth rate was strongest in the West Loop, defined as the area west of Franklin Street including the strong Wacker Drive market. Substantial infill development occurred between Wells Street and the Chicago River and a number of buildings were constructed west of Canal Street, an area previously considered marginal. Given the importance of the West Loop rail stations to commuters, and the increasing scarcity of available sites in the traditional core, continued westward expansion seems likely.

Relatively little office construction occurred in the East Loop – indeed, the most notable development was the conversion of some Class C buildings to residential and educational use. Office construction north of the river is limited and is expected to account for less than 15 percent of new demand. No speculative office construction at all occurred south of Congress Parkway, although two dedicated bank processing facilities were built on South Canal Street.

TRANSIT IS THE CENTRAL AREA'S MAJOR ATTRACTION FOR BUSINESS

To gauge the Central Area's economic prospects, top executives at 300 downtown businesses were surveyed. Survey respondents identified the following as the most important factors in choosing a downtown location:

- Proximity to mass transit was the chief consideration according to 73% of respondents. According to the survey, 72% of employees take CTA or Metra to the workplace, while 23% drive and 6% walk.
- Other important factors were proximity to clients (46%) and state-of-the-art technology infrastructure (43%).
- Nearly one-third of companies interviewed indicated that an "urban residential life-style" was a factor in the decision to locate downtown.

Locational factors considered important in recruiting and retaining employees included:

- Location in the Chicago region (80%)
- Location in downtown Chicago (70%)
- Proximity to mass transit (61%).

Factors considered of lesser importance included:

- Availability of parking (19%)
- Proximity to personal and retail services (12%)
- Proximity to downtown housing (8%).

In short, the Central Area's traditional strength as a regional commercial center with good transit access continues to be its principal selling point for corporate decision makers. Its recent emergence as a high-end residential district has also increased its attractiveness to business in attracting top talent to the area.

Projected Growth : 32 to 40 million square feet of new office space to accommodate 180,000 to 200,000 new jobs.

Figure 2.14
The Central Area Office Core remains the prime location for office space.

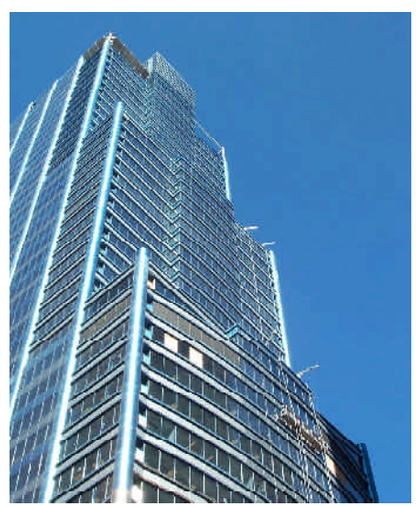


Figure 2.15
New office buildings are being constructed in the Wacker Drive corridor.

Figure 2.16
Central Area Residential Development
1980-2020

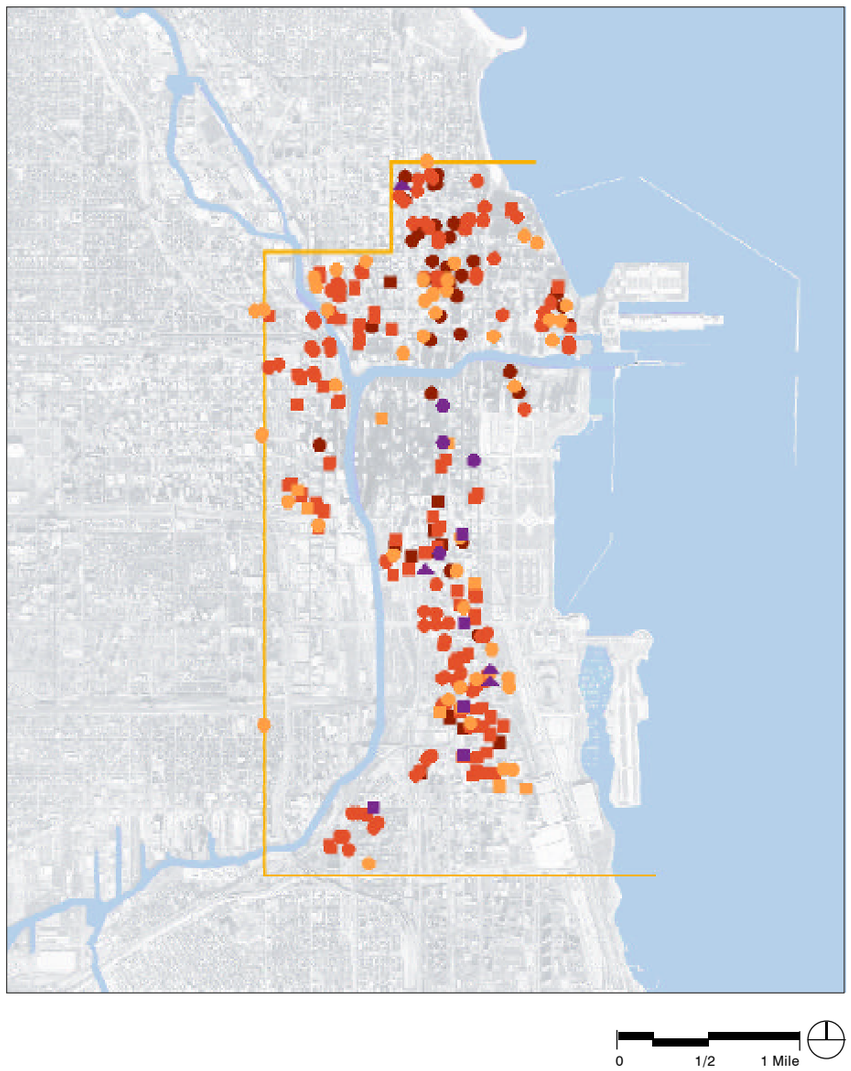
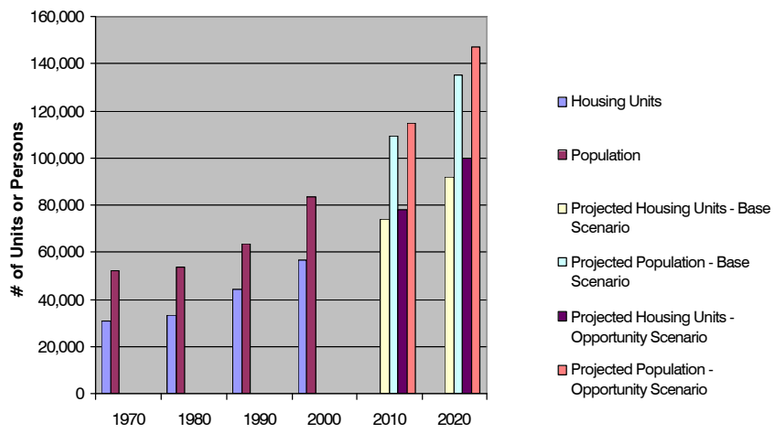


Table 2.5
Housing Units and Population,
Chicago Central Area, 1970-2020



Population projections assume average household size of 1.47 persons based on 2000 Central Area census results.

A Quality Place to Live: The Residential Sector

The Central Area housing boom will build on the momentum of the 1980's and 1990's

DRAMATIC RESIDENTIAL GROWTH

The surge in the Central Area residential market was one of the most remarkable development trends of the 1990's. Between 1990 and 2000 downtown Chicago had one of the highest residential growth rates of any major U.S. city. It now ranks fourth in downtown population behind New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, and at the current rate of increase will rank second within a few years.

More than 32,000 dwellings were constructed in the Central Area between 1980 and 2000, for a net increase (less demolitions) of 23,000 units. The residential population increased 56% and currently exceeds 83,000. The pace of development continues, with 15,000 units added between 2000 and 2002.

In the 1980's, about four out of five new units were rental, many in large-scale developments financed with federal or state assistance. Presidential Towers alone had nearly 2,500 units. In the 1990's, over half of the new units were in privately financed condominium projects. Shifting demographics, a healthy economy, and low interest rates were important factors in this change.

On average during the 1990's roughly 1,600 dwellings were built annually, for a net increase of 1,300 when demolitions are taken into account. A base growth scenario of 1,800 dwellings annually and an opportunity scenario of 2,200 are projected through 2020. These projections consider absorption history, land availability, product trends, density, and the competitive position of the Central Area relative to other Chicago communities.

CHANGING LAND USE

An important factor in the growth of downtown housing was the creation of stable residential markets south and west of the Loop, and the expansion of the Near North Side housing market south of Chicago Avenue. Many projects in these areas were built on former railroad and industrial land, including Dearborn Park, Illinois Center, Central Station, Kinzie Station, and River East. Adaptive reuse of office and industrial buildings led the way in creating new neighborhoods in the West Loop and River North and diversifying the Loop. Few conversion opportunities remain, leading developers to construct new buildings.

ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

Central Area housing meets the needs of a broad range of household incomes. Much of the new development caters to the affluent, particularly empty nesters. Moderate-income, often younger households tend to be attracted to moderately-priced lofts and condominium conversions. Chinatown and Pilsen continue their long history of providing affordable family housing. Affordable housing, including SROs, senior housing, low-income housing, and tax-credit rentals, remains an important part of Central Area housing stock.

Chicago Housing Authority properties include Hilliard Homes and Ickes Homes, which are being redeveloped as mixed-income communities. Student housing is proliferating, particularly in the South Loop, adding considerably to the vitality of the Central Area.

Downtown residents are not typical of Chicagoans as a whole – they tend to be more affluent and have fewer children. A 1999 study sponsored by the City of Chicago on the demand for downtown housing, "An Analysis of the Market Potential for Residential Development – Central Core Area – Chicago, Illinois", by Tracy Cross and Associates, Inc., concludes that the price of a typical three-bedroom townhome in the Central Area is roughly twice that of a typical suburban home, limiting the appeal of the Central Area to families with children.

Projected Growth : 36,000-44,000 new dwellings, 54,000-64,000 more residents.

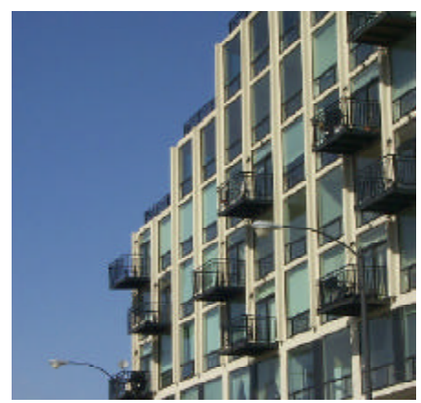


Figure 2.17 and Figure 2.18
There was a net increase of 23,000 residential units between 1980 and 2000 in the Central Area.

Figure 2.19
DePaul University

Figure 2.20
Educational institutions have preserved and reused many East and South Loop buildings.

Table 2.6
Post Secondary School Enrollment

School	Tot. Enrollment
DePaul University	10,821
Harold Washington College	9,709
Columbia College	9,000
Roosevelt University	3,600
Northwestern University	3,555
Robert Morris College	2,678
School of the Art Institute	2,500
National-Louis University	1,850
John Marshall Law School	1,350
East-West University	840
International Academy of Merchandizing and Design	815
American Academy of Art	400
Harrington Institute of Interior Design	384
Adler School of Professional Psychology	300
Spertus College	200
Career Colleges of Chicago	155
Institute for Clinical Social Work	100
Chicago School of Professional Psychology	NA
MacCormac College	NA
Sub-total	**48,257**
University of Illinois-Chicago	25,625
TOTAL (including UIC)	**73,882**

Source: Individual school administrators, school websites, Goodman Williams Group and Arthur Anderson LLP

A Crossroads of Ideas: The Education Sector

Educational institutions will continue to invest in the Central Area, providing opportunities for life-long learning

The East and South Loop are now home to a major concentration of post-secondary schools. Institutions of higher learning became a major presence in the Central Area during the study period. Currently 22 post-secondary schools are located downtown with a total enrollment of approximately 51,000 students. The University of Illinois at Chicago, located immediately west of the Central Area, adds another 25,000 students for a total of 76,000. The largest concentration of schools are in the portion of the East Loop bounded by Michigan Avenue and Dearborn Street, Madison Street and 14th Street.

Interviews were conducted with administrators at the Central Area institutions likely to experience the highest levels of growth – Columbia College, DePaul University, Roosevelt University, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. These interviews revealed:

- Over the next five years, enrollment at these four institutions is expected to increase 34% from the current 25,000 students to more than 34,000.
- Over the next five to 10 years, total square footage is projected to increase 18%, from approximately 4.4 million square feet to more than 5.2 million.
- Over the next five to ten years, the demand for additional dormitory beds is expected to increase 125% from the current 1,300 beds to more than 3,000 beds in order to meet the increase in the 18- to 24-year-old student population.
- Many institutions have purchased or leased lots or buildings that can be developed into classroom, administrative, or dormitory space in order to accommodate anticipated growth and compete in the increasingly competitive downtown real estate market.

Projected Growth : an additional 3-4 million square feet of space by 2020 for classroom, administrative, or dormitory space.

The Marketplace: Retailing in the Central Area

Central Area retailing is poised for growth extending beyond the established Michigan Avenue and State Street shopping districts

Retail growth occurred throughout the Central Area during the 1990's, partly in response to the growing downtown residential population. Retail space increased from 7.2 million square feet in 1990 to 9.2 million in 2000, an average of 200,000 square feet a year. During the period from 1997 to the present more than 3.6 million square feet of retail space were completed, under construction, or in planning throughout the Central Area.

NORTH MICHIGAN AND STATE STREET

Together, North Michigan Avenue and the State Street - Wabash Avenue retail corridors constitute approximately 60% of all retail activity in the Central Area. The two corridors serve distinctly different markets. A survey of 4,700 downtown shoppers conducted for this plan found that Michigan Avenue shoppers were largely U.S. and international visitors while the State Street - Wabash Avenue corridor predominantly served downtown workers and city residents.

New retail developments included the State Street openings of Sears, Borders Books, Old Navy, and the DePaul Center, as well as the North Bridge Mall development on North Michigan Avenue. The largest share of new development (45%) occurred in the North Michigan Avenue corridor, which added approximately 900,000 square feet, including Nordstrom's at 271,000 square feet. The State-Wabash corridor added more than 285,000 square feet between 1991 and 1999, with the new Sears store on State Street adding another 243,000 square feet in 2001. Vacancy rates dropped and rents increased in both districts between 1990 and 1999.

NEW TRENDS

Continuing retail expansion is demonstrated by the 78 new stores that opened in the Central Area between 1999 and 2002. A major new trend is the emergence of convenience shopping to serve new residents – eight new downtown food and drugstores have opened or are under construction. "Big box" retail is anticipated on Roosevelt Road and Cermak Road west of Canal Street on the Near South Side, similar to the type of retail in the North Avenue - Clybourn Street corridor on the North Side.

Projected Growth : Average annual growth of 250,000 to 350,000 square feet is projected through 2020, for a total of 5 to 7 million square feet of new retail space.

Figure 2.21
Specialty shopping districts are emerging, like this one in River North.

Figure 2.22
North Michigan Avenue had the largest share of retail development in the 1990's.

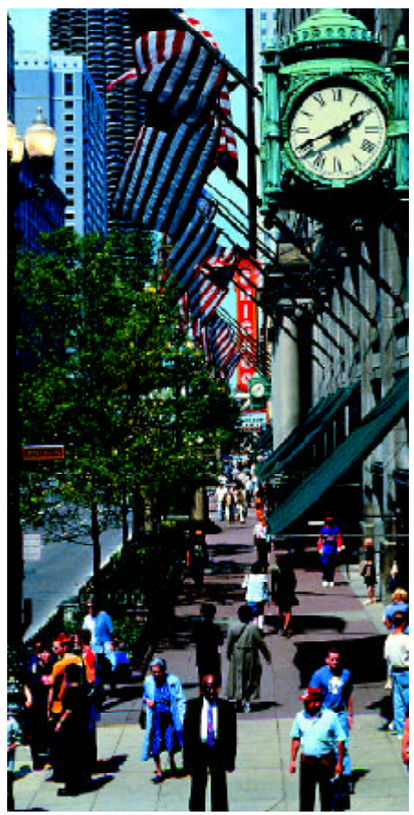


Figure 2.23
State Street continues its tradition as a great retail street with its major anchor stores, the new Sears and Borders, and other new retailers.

Visiting the Central Area: Convention & Hotel Sector

Expansion of McCormick Place, office and tourism growth will continue to bring more visitors to Chicago.

Figure 2.24
The recent expansion of McCormick Place has doubled the number of events, which attract more than 3 million people annually.

The Chicago convention and hotel industries are closely linked. In 2000, 52% of Chicago's hotel traffic was derived from meetings and conventions, 35% from other business travel, and 13% from tourism. Some 35 million people visit Chicago annually, the majority of them on business.

The Central Area's hotel and convention business grew substantially during the study period. Highlights:

- Since the opening of the South Building in 1996, McCormick Place has retained its place as the nation's largest convention center with over 2.2 million square feet of exhibit space. In order to meet increased demand and compete with other large convention centers in Orlando and Las Vegas, McCormick Place plans to build an additional 800,000 square feet of exhibition and meeting space by 2007.
- Since 1990, the number of events at McCormick Place has roughly doubled, from 40 events annually to more than 80 events in 1999. Attendance has grown commensurately, topping 3 million attendees in 1999.
- Convention and business travel will remain the major drivers of Chicago hotel traffic for the foreseeable future. However, pleasure travel is playing a larger role as the Central Area's attractiveness as a tourist destination increases.
- The inventory of Central Area hotel rooms increased by an average of 300 rooms per year between 1980 and 2000 in response to the growth of McCormick Place, tourism, and the expanding downtown office market. The majority of the growth occurred in recent years, with more than 5,000 hotel rooms built or renovated between 1998 and 2000. Average annual occupancy rose to a record 74% in 2000.
- Thirteen hotel projects totaling more than 5,700 rooms are currently under construction or planned. The majority of projects are in the River North and Streeterville areas and range in size between 250 and 450 rooms. Most of the new rooms are expected to be delivered to market by the end of 2003.

Projected Growth : The Central Area will add 600 to 700 hotel rooms annually for a total of 12,000 to 14,000 by 2020.

A Global Draw: Cultural Attractions

The Central Area's world-class museums and cultural attractions are powerful tourist magnets

Long valued for their contribution to the city's cultural life, Chicago's museums and cultural attractions have assumed increasing importance as tourism destinations over the past 20 years, particularly since 1995. Of Chicago's top 14 tourist attractions, eight are cultural institutions: the Shedd Aquarium, Field Museum, Art Institute, Cultural Center, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Adler Planetarium, Chicago Children's Museum, and Museum of Broadcast Communications. Between 500,000 and 2.5 million people visit each of these attractions annually. To accommodate the increase in visitors, many of the museums have embarked on expansion programs. Highlights:

- The Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum spent $46 million on building expansion and exhibit improvements. The Planetarium expects to spend another $5 million in the next five years on further improvements.
- The Art Institute of Chicago is planning a new wing. Tentatively scheduled for completion in 2006, the new wing will contain approximately 250,000 square feet and cost $175 million.
- The Field Museum invested approximately $43 million in recent years on the Underground Adventure and Sue the Dinosaur exhibits. The museum expects to spend approximately $250 million over the next five years on new exhibits, a conservation/environmental initiative, maintenance, technology, and other purposes.
- The John G. Shedd Aquarium is currently in the midst of a $110 million program to renovate existing facilities and add 45,000 square feet of space. The institution plans to spend another $110 million by 2012 for further renovations and an additional 45,000 square feet.
- Millennium Park is expected to draw 2.5 to 3 million visitors annually, equal to the combined draw of the Art Institute and the Field Museum.
- The Randolph Street theater district saw the opening or renovation of the Cadillac Palace Theater, the Goodman Theatre, the Oriental Theater/ Ford Center for the Performing Arts and the Chicago Theater. The forthcoming Chicago Music and Dance Theater in Millennium Park will add to this cultural mix and extend the district.
- The Chicago Architectural Foundation has expanded its facilities to serve as a focal point for visitors who come to explore Chicago's rich architectural heritage.

Projected Growth : Central Area cultural institutions will add 85,000 to 100,000 square feet of space annually, a total of 1.7 to 2 million square feet by 2020.

Figure 2.25
The Field Museum and its neighbors on the newly integrated museum campus are major attractions for tourists and residents. Development of the museum campus has dramatically enhanced lakefront public space.

Making and Moving Products: The Industrial Sector

Industrial land close to downtown is essential for warehousing and distribution services

Figure 2.26
Printing and distribution in the Central Area

Figure 2.27
Manufacturing on Goose Island

CHANGING LAND USE AND EMPLOYMENT
Central Area employment in traditional industrial and commercial sectors such as manufacturing, transportation, and wholesale trade has fallen to a fraction of the level of 30 years ago. As recently as the 1970's the loft buildings of Printing House Row still housed printing presses, and men's suits were manufactured in the West Loop. All of these buildings have since been torn down or converted to residential or other uses.

FUTURE NEEDS
Despite these changes, industrial land continues to have an important role to play in the Central Area. Downtown businesses are leading consumers of warehousing and distribution services, including overnight package delivery, document storage, printing and binding, food and janitorial services, vehicle depots, and parts distribution. The continuing high rate of downtown construction requires convenient staging areas and building materials transshipment points. The projected growth of the office core and the restaurant and entertainment sector will create additional demand for warehousing and distribution services over the next 20 years.

RETAINING INDUSTRIAL LAND
Goose Island, the Kinzie Industrial Corridor and Pilsen are important centers for distribution, warehousing, and related uses, with rising employment and land prices and low vacancy rates. The Pilsen industrial corridor currently has 186 companies and 11,000 jobs, up from 8,500 jobs in 1998.

As existing industrial properties are converted to other uses, those remaining become increasingly precious. Planned manufacturing districts have been established to preserve industrial areas. The remaining sizable reservoirs of industrial space in the Central Area are:

- the Chicago-Halsted Planned Manufacturing District (PMD), which is anchored by the Tribune Company's Freedom Center printing plant
- the Canal-Desplaines corridor south of Harrison Street. Buffered by railroad tracks on the east and the Dan Ryan Expressway on the west, this corridor is ideal for continued industrial use.

Projected Growth: In the area bounded by Ashland, North Avenue, Lake Michigan and the Stevenson Expressway, there are currently 933 acres of industrial land, containing 272 businesses and 15,590 jobs. To serve the growing downtown business core, it is critical to preserve a minimum of 933 acres for continued industrial, warehousing and distribution use.

Ensuring Capacity: Utilities

Existing high and low-tech utility service provides the Central Area with a clear advantage over competing business centers

ELECTRIC POWER

Commonwealth Edison is engaged in a multibillion dollar upgrade of its Chicago power distribution grid, with emphasis on the Central Area. To maintain consistent service as demand for power grows, the upgraded system will feature additional substations and greater interconnection between nodes to provide back-up connections. Completion of major substation projects in the optimization program is set for 2007.

The City of Chicago will implement its Energy Management Plan to make Chicago the nation's smartest energy manager, encouraging renewable energy and energy efficient new residential and office construction.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Central Area is well positioned to take advantage of developments in communications technology, notably fiber optics:

- The nation's network of fiber optic cable has been developed primarily along rail rights-of-way, which converge on downtown Chicago. Lines extend throughout downtown using the existing freight tunnels. Numerous operators are actively laying fiber downtown.
- The Central Loop and East Loop are most densely served by the existing fiber network. Fiber is also following the market into the West Loop, South Loop and other areas.
- The fiber optic system will be anchored by a network of telecom hotels, which provide an alternative to the traditional hub-and-spoke (copper wiring) system. One telecom hotel has been built and one is currently under construction.

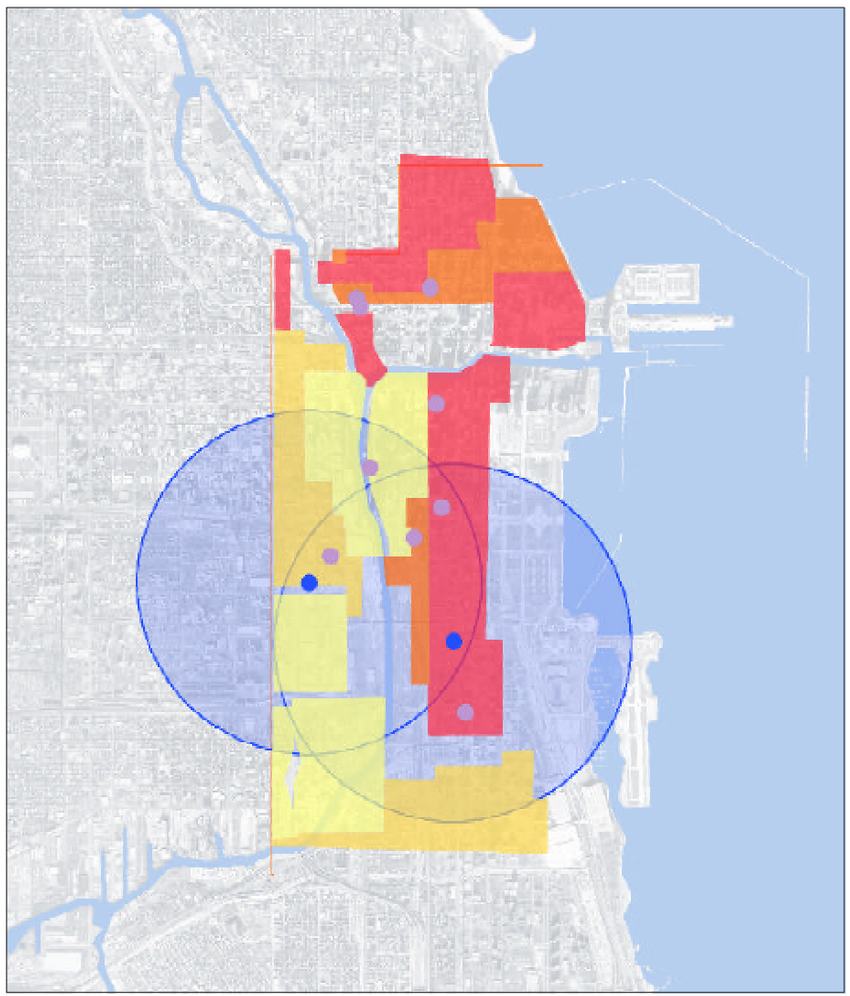
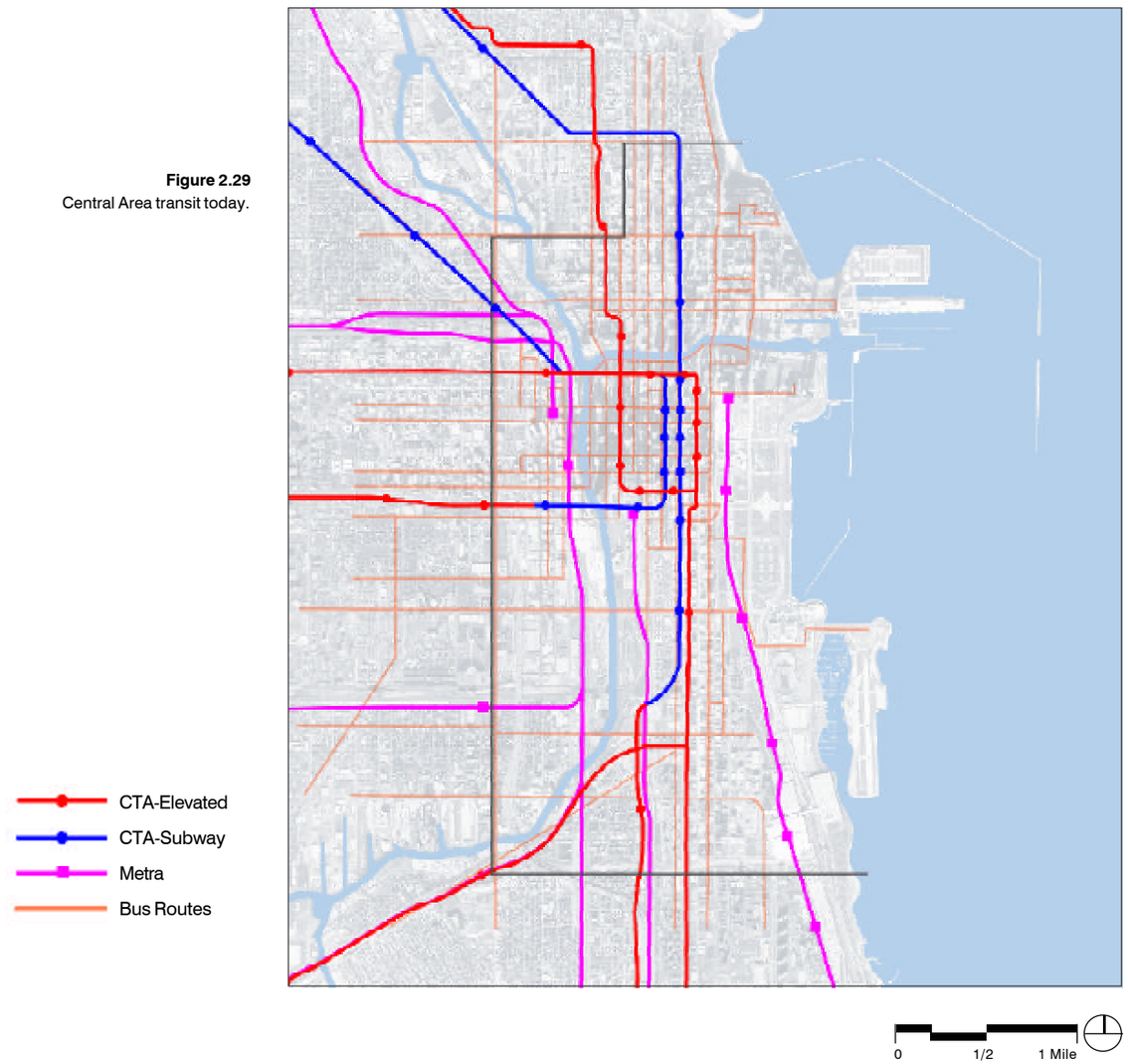


Figure 2.28
Commonwealth Edison is engaged in a multibillion dollar upgrade of its Chicago power distribution grid, with emphasis on the Central Area.

Figure 2.29
Central Area transit today.



Getting To and Around the Central Area: The Key Role of Transportation

Growth in the downtown workforce will result in 166,000 to 240,000 additional inbound work trips, an increase of 28% to 41%.

Chicago developed as the transportation hub of the Midwest, first because of its river, lake and canal connections, and next as the nation's railroad center. Commuter rail and the Chicago Transit Authority's rapid transit and bus systems have made it a regional hub, bringing thousands of people to work, shop and play daily. The exceptional transportation infrastructure of the Central Area makes it the ideal place in the region for growth.

CURRENT ASSESSMENT
Currently, 53% of inbound work trips to the Central Area use public transit. The Loop has the most convenient transit access and the most expensive parking – therefore, more people ride transit to work in the Loop than to other Central Area neighborhoods.

More than 39% of Central Area workers arrive by automobile, while just over 7% walk or use alternative transportation modes.

ACCOMMODATING GROWTH
Growth scenarios call for expanding inbound work trips by 28 to 41%. It is critical for Chicago's air quality, economic success and quality of life that a high percentage of these trips use public transit, or alternative modes such as walking or bicycling. Existing roadway capacity is limited, and creating additional or expanded rights-of-way is cost prohibitive and would have adverse environmental impact. The Chicago Department of Transportation's (CDOT) analyses indicate that a significant increase in downtown auto traffic during morning and evening peak periods will result in severe congestion.

Projected growth
CDOT assumes that, conservatively, 58% of workers in 2020 will use mass transit, adding 116,000 to 167,000 new inbound riders – an increase of 38% to 55% above current peak load. This would require an additional 120 to 200 CTA buses, increased CTA rapid transit capacity, and 27-45 new peak hour Metra commuter trains.

Figures 2.30 and 2.31
Today, CTA rail and bus and Metra commuter rail accounts for 53% of inbound work trips. As the Central Area grows, it is critical to increase the use of public transit, walking and alternative modes of transportation in order to avoid gridlock, protect air quality and keep the Central Area livable.

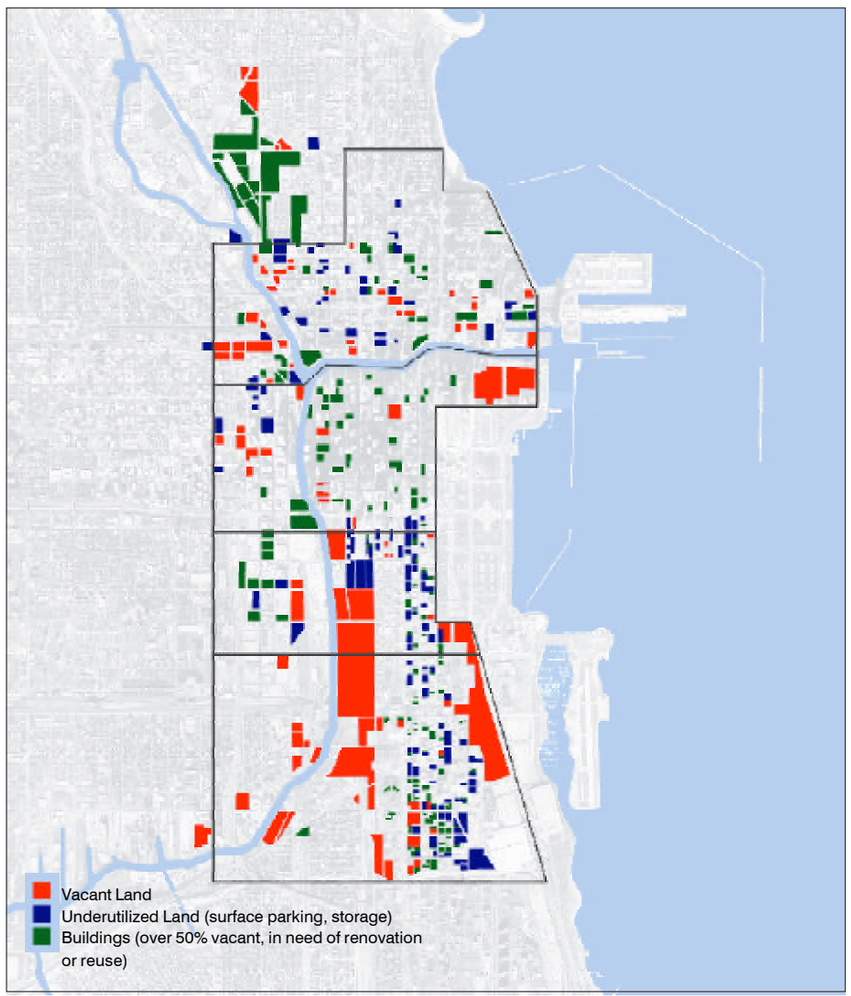


Figure 2.32
Opportunities for Development, 2001-2020

Table 2.7
Allocation of Market Demand by Sector and District

	Study Area Districts					
	Near North	Loop W. of River	Loop E. of River	South Loop	Near South	Total
Percent of Market Demand (Sq. Ft.)						
Office	11%	26%	60%	3%	n/a	100%
Retail	35%	9%	14%	17%	25%	100%
Residential	30%	2.5%	7.5%	15%	45%	100%
Cultural	10%	4%	36%	35%	15%	100%
Convention/Conference	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%	100%
Post Secondary Education	7%	1.5%	35%	53%	3.5%	100%
Hotel	55%	5%	30%	10%	n/a	100%
BASE DEMAND SCENARIO -AVERAGE ANNUAL ACREAGE DEMAND						
Market Segments						
Office	0.3	0.6	0.9	0.2	n/a	2.00
Retail	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.7	2.40
Residential	1.0	0.1	0.4	1.0	4.4	6.90
Cultural	0.05	0.02	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.57
Convention/Conference	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.60	0.60
Post Secondary Education	0.01	0.003	0.10	0.30	0.02	0.43
Hotel	0.2	0.03	0.1	0.1	n/a	0.43
TOTAL Avg. Annual Demand Increase (acres)	**2**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**6**	**13**
20 Year Acreage Demand	40	20	40	40	120	260
Total Year 2000 Land Supply (acres)	87	28	58	122	262	557
Build-out by District (years)	**44**	**28**	**29**	**61**	**44**	**43**
OPPORTUNITY DEMAND SCENARIO - AVERAGE ANNUAL ACREAGE DEMAND						
Market Segments						
Office	0.5	0.8	1.3	0.2	n/a	2.80
Retail	0.9	0.2	0.4	0.7	1.0	3.20
Residential	1.5	0.2	0.5	1.5	6.2	9.90
Cultural	0.06	0.02	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.58
Convention/Conference	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.80	0.80
Post Secondary Education	0.02	0.004	0.10	0.40	0.02	0.55
Hotel	0.3	0.04	0.2	0.1	n/a	0.64
TOTAL Avg. Annual Demand Increase *(acres)*	**3**	**1**	**3**	**3**	**8**	**18**
20 Year Acreage Demand	60	20	60	60	160	360
Total Year 2000 Land Supply (acres)	87	28	58	122	262	557
Build-out by District (years)	**29**	**28**	**19**	**41**	**33**	**31**

Source: Arthur Andersen LLP, Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill LLP, Goodman Williams Group, and City of Chicago, Dept. of Planning
Revised May 21, 2001

Opportunities for Growth

The Central Area has sufficient land to accommodate future development, but it is critical to direct specific types of growth to appropriate districts to create an economically successful, vibrant city. Figure 2.31 shows opportunities for development, and Table 2.7 shows the demand for land by market segment under base and opportunity scenarios. The priorities in directing this growth will be to build upon the strengths of the Central Area's districts, focusing each use into those locations that have the appropriate level of access, compatible existing uses, and will promote quality of life.

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE CENTRAL AREA

Vacant land, under-utilized land, obsolete and under-occupied buildings combine to offer the opportunity to develop 207 million square feet of new space by 2020.

New development is expected to restore and reuse many older buildings and find creative new uses for historic landmarks throughout the Central Area.

The largest land development opportunities are at former rail yard and industrial sites to the east, south and northwest of the Loop. Underutilized land is concentrated in the South Michigan-Wabash and State street corridor and also found in the South Loop, West Loop and the Near North. The Loop offers larger opportunities for renovation or redevelopment of obsolete or vacant buildings and the sites they stand on. Smaller renovation and redevelopment opportunities are offered in all of the Central Area districts. Development opportunities for service, distribution and light industry exist in planned manufacturing districts and industrial corridors.

THE DEMAND FOR LAND IN THE CENTRAL AREA

The Central Area's various market sectors have sought out locations where infrastructure, amenities and compatible neighbors make their success possible. Demand for office space is greatest in areas adjacent to the existing office core and near public transit, while residential demand is greatest beyond it. Retailers seek out each other, knowing they each benefit from a known shopping destination. Education institutions have developed a shared recognition of the value of older office buildings for their own needs. Distribution and industrial uses are critical to support the growing business district, and land is being reserved for these in industrial corridors and planned manufacturing districts.

Demand for land and space varies by sector in the Near North, the South Loop and Near South side. The Central Area's current land uses indicate clear concentrations by sector. However, a tremendous diversity and mix of uses can be found in each of the Central Area's districts, creating strong places as well as a strong economy.

OFFICE GROWTH : SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

At first glance, there appears to be ample room for growth. Under the most land-intensive scenario, 360 acres would be required through 2020. Currently 555 acres are available. Sizable tracts are available for residential and mixed-used development.

However, land suitable for high-density office development is limited. Under the most land-intensive scenario, office development will consume 62 acres through 2020. A location convenient to transit lines serving both city and suburbs is essential. Relatively little land remains in the traditional central business district.

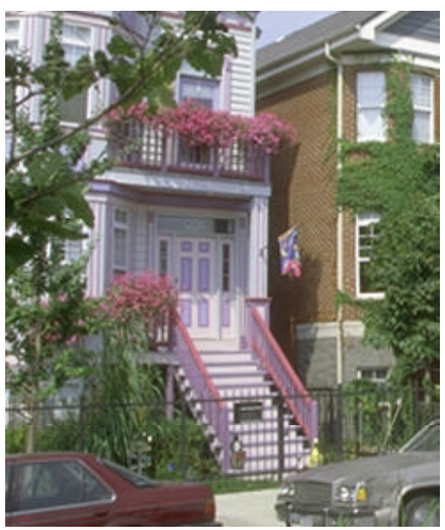
The prospects for expansion of the office core north, south and east are limited. The North Michigan Avenue corridor and the East Loop saw weak office demand during the 1990's because they were not convenient to the West Loop commuter stations. Efforts to establish a speculative market for "back office" space south of Congress thus far have not been successful. As a result, the office core has expanded toward the west. Approximately 45% of recent projects have been built in the West Loop and west of the river.

The widely-held view in the development community is that more projects would be built west of the river if the zoning permitted higher density. Currently, the maximum permissible density in much of this district is relatively low, reflecting its industrial past. If greater density were permitted and new transit facilities provided, an estimated 30 percent of projected office demand could be accommodated west of the river.

Figure 2.33
The South Loop and the Near South provide great opportunities for future residential and retail developments as well as continued rail oriented uses.
(View of Roosevelt Road Corridor looking east)

CHAPTER 3

Vision and Guiding Themes



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The Vision

Chicago's Central Area has experienced extraordinary growth since 1980 and faces equally profound changes in the decades to come. By 2020 Chicago's Central Area will be:

A Vision for Chicago's Central Area in 2020

GLOBAL CHICAGO
One of the World's Great Crossroads Cities
Chicago will retain its role as one of the world's great crossroads cities, attracting businesses, residents and visitors internationally. Its Central Area will be a preeminent international meeting place, easily accessible from major destinations around the globe via expanded O'Hare International and Midway Airports.

Chicago's Central Area will remain the dominant business center in the interior of the United States. It will be the choice for companies seeking a world or U.S. headquarters site with a high quality work force, a supportive business environment, excellent transportation and infrastructure, convenient access to national and world markets, and an exceptional quality of life.

REGIONAL CHICAGO
Downtown of the Midwest
The Central Area will be the "Downtown of the Midwest," the region's first choice for business, retailing, and entertainment. It will be a leading tourist destination, sought out for its cultural attractions, magnificent architecture, lively street and night life, and fine restaurants and shops. It will be a magnet for the best and brightest among the region's young people, who will enrich the city with their creativity, enthusiasm, and hard work. Its regional role will be strengthened as high speed rail is introduced into the Midwest.

HOME TOWN CHICAGO
The Heart of Chicagoland
Downtown Chicago will offer an urban living experience matched by only a handful of cities in North America, with outstanding access to cultural opportunities and the excitement of city life without sacrificing security, convenience, or a sense of community. It will support economic and social diversity. It will embody a great city's capacity to awe and charm, to entertain, and to enlighten. The Central Area will remain the heart of the metropolitan area, the place where Chicagoans gather for celebrations. It will also be a place that reflects its great architectural legacy, with a clear commitment to preserving the best of its buildings and public spaces.

GREEN CHICAGO
The Greenest City in the United States
Chicago's Central Area will be a model of sustainability for America and the world in the 21st Century. It will exemplify a commitment to transit first, be a smart energy manager, bring the use of renewable power and green technologies to the fore in new buildings, lead in the sensitive management of waste, and rebuild the bio-diversity of its open spaces, river and lakefront.

Figure 3.1
Cermak Road today

Figure 3.2
Cermak Road will become a higher density corridor connecting McCormick Place, Motor Row, Chinatown and the new neighborhoods in the Near South Side district.

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The Guiding Themes

The guiding themes for Chicago's Central Area serve as the "rules of the plan." They provide a basis for future development and a framework for making decisions.

Theme 1
Development Framework

Direct growth to create a dynamic Central Area made up of vibrant and diverse mixed-use urban districts

- Extend the highest density office core into the West Loop around transit stations, services and the Chicago River
- Develop high-density, mixed-use corridors which extend from the expanded Loop and are linked to transit
- Support a diverse collection of livable neighborhoods and special places
- Preserve and strengthen the Central Area's world-renowned architectural and cultural heritage
- Strengthen Industrial Corridors and Planned Manufacturing Districts
- Direct the growth of the Central Area's educational institutions and provide opportunities for lifelong learning
- Promote and strengthen the Central Area's world-class cultural assets

Theme 2
Transportation

Strengthen transportation connections to keep the Central Area easy to reach and get around

- Make transit the first choice for people coming to the Central Area
- Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment
- Efficiently manage traffic circulation and parking to prevent gridlock
- Encourage alternative modes such as bicycles and water taxis
- Increase CTA and Metra capacity to bring workers to the Central Area.
- Improve national and international connections.

Theme 3
Waterfronts and Open Spaces

Expand and connect waterfronts and open spaces to create great public places.

- Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space
- Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous open space system
- Create the next generation of urban and neighborhood parks to support the growing population
- Complete the Central Area's framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards

Figure 3.3
Encourage the development of a new generation of energy efficient buildings and infrastructure.

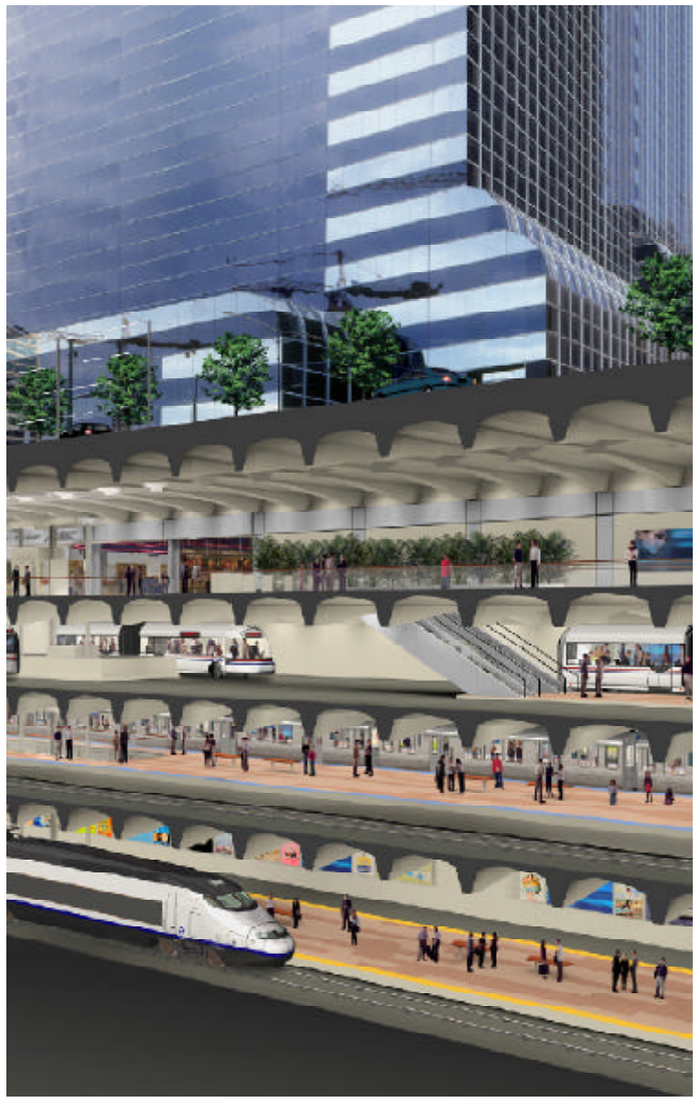

Figure 3.4
Ensure transit and inter-city access to the Central Area to provide a clear alternative to driving.

Figure 3.5
Create new parks, greenways and a continuous riverwalk.

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Green Chicago: A Commitment to the Environment

The Greenest City in the Nation

Almost 100 years ago, the Commercial Club of Chicago published the Daniel Burnham's Plan of Chicago, launching a series of improvements that gave Chicago international standing for the quality of its civic realm. This plan offers a new prospect: a Central Area with international standing for the quality of its urban environment. The Central Area will stand as a model of the relationship between environmental and economic sustainability. It will be a beautiful central city with high quality air, water and land, and a place where people will want to invest, work, play and live.

REGIONAL BENEFITS

The three fundamental goals of this plan – directing growth to a central city comprised of dynamic mixed-use districts; emphasizing transit; and creating and enhancing open spaces and waterfronts – are part of a broader environmental policy with direct benefits to the region. This plan allows the region to:

- Make the most efficient use of the region's land, support already urbanized areas and preserve open space and agricultural land at the region's edge by limiting sprawl.
- Maximize the value of existing infrastructure and reduce regional expenditures on new infrastructure.
- Support transportation efficiency and improve air quality by allowing more people to walk, bike and ride transit to work.

DEVELOPMENT: MANAGE LAND FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Develop mixed-use walkable districts with good transit access.

- Reduce dependence on cars by allowing people to live within walking distance or a short transit trip to work, shopping and entertainment.

Increase recycling and material recovery.

Promote Environmental remediation.

- Clean up environmentally challenged sites and bring them back to active, productive use.
- Encourage the use of clean and renewable power and alternative energy sources.

Energy Efficiency

- Implement Chicago's citywide energy code to reduce energy use, improve energy efficiency, lower operating costs and reduce emissions.
- Take the lead by retrofitting City of Chicago owned buildings with energy saving equipment and installing solar panels.

Encourage the development of a new generation of energy efficient, resource conserving buildings and infrastructure in the Central Area.

- Promote environmentally sound "green design" and construction of new buildings following Green Building standards to conserve energy, water and resources
- Promote the use of recyclable materials, and create healthy indoor environments.
- Lead by example by implementing green design in the construction and operation of new City facilities.

TRANSPORTATION: REDUCE DEPENDANCE ON CARS

- Locate job growth at the center of the regional transportation system to support transportation efficiency and allow more people to ride transit to work.
- Ensure transit and inter-city access to the Central Area to provide a clear alternative to driving.
- Increase the number of alternative fuel transit vehicles to reduce pollutant emissions.
- Encourage walking, with pedestrian-friendly streets, greenways and open spaces.
- Encourage bicycling with bicycle-friendly streets, bike paths and secure bicycle storage facilities.
- Limit downtown parking to prevent gridlock and improve air quality.

OPEN SPACE AND WATERFRONTS: THE GREEN LANDSCAPE

The plan promotes:

- Create new parks, greenways and a continuous riverwalk.
- Expand streetscape and infrastructure greening.
- Encourage community greening of neighborhood parks, gardens and schools.
- Encourage rooftop gardens and planted balconies to reduce "urban heat islands."
- Restore natural habitats along waterfronts and open spaces.

Waterfronts and Water Quality

- Make the Lakefront and the Chicago River models for nature-based recreation and environmental education.
- Restore fishable and swimmable water to the Chicago River by 2020.
- Implement good storm water management in the Central Area to help to clean river and lake water. New approaches to storm water control include green rooftops, wetlands restoration, swales, filters, trenches and detention basins at river and lake edges.
- Reconstruct river edges to ensure safe access to the water, while preserving valuable natural, historical and aesthetic features, and creating improvements that are friendly to paddlers.
- Support habitat continuity through the development of a greenway and waterway network that promotes wildlife survival and movement.
- Support bio-diversity through natural approaches to landscaping.
- Encourage residents to become stewards of the environment by educating them about the river, lake, land and conservation.

Chapter 4 : THEME 1

Development Framework

Direct growth to create a dynamic Central Area made up of vibrant, mixed-use districts

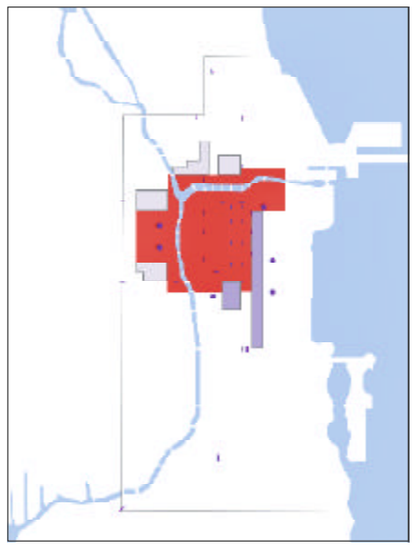


Figure 4.1.1 The Expanded Loop

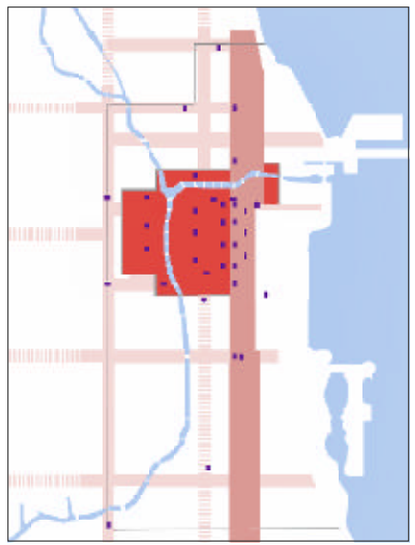


Fig. 4.1.2 High-Density, Mixed-Use Corridors

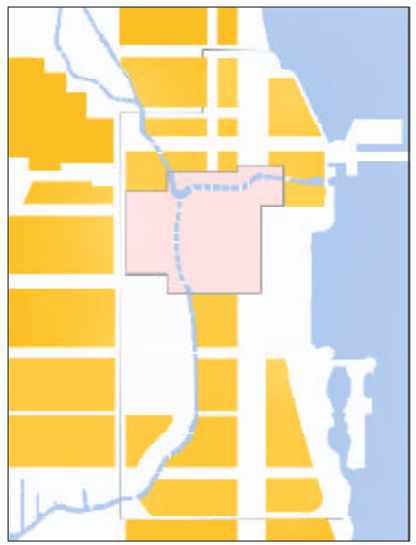


Fig. 4.1.3 Neighborhoods and Special Places

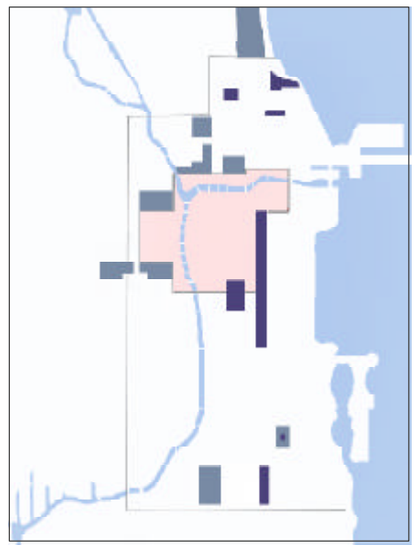


Fig. 4.1.4 Landmark and Character Districts

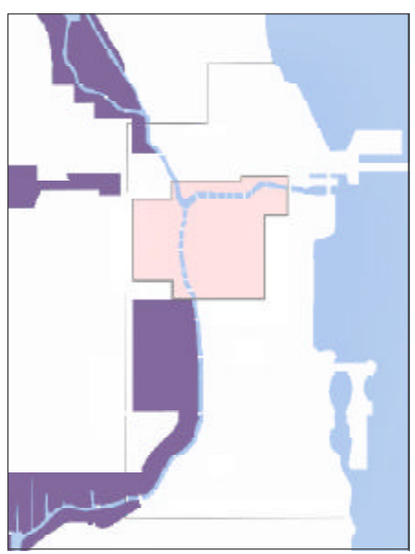


Fig. 4.1.5 Industrial Districts and Corridors

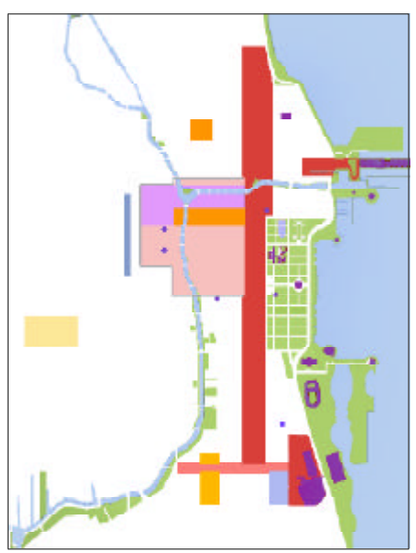


Fig. 4.1.6 Cultural Attractions and Tourist Destinations

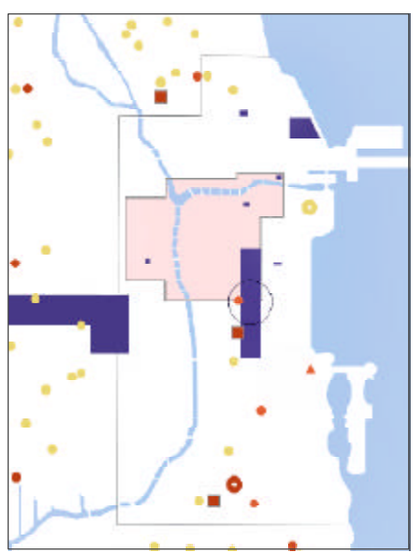


Fig. 4.1.7 Education and Learning

Theme 1
Development Framework

Direct growth to create a dynamic Central Area made up of vibrant, mixed-use urban districts

Guiding Principles

- **THE EXPANDED LOOP**
  Extend the highest density office core into the West Loop around transit stations, services and the Chicago River
- **HIGH-DENSITY, MIXED-USE CORRIDORS**
  Develop high-density, mixed-use corridors which extend from the expanded Loop and are served by transit
- **NEIGHBORHOODS AND SPECIAL PLACES**
  Support a diverse collection of livable neighborhoods and special places
- **LANDMARKS AND CHARACTER DISTRICTS**
  Preserve and strengthen the Central Area's world-renowned architectural and cultural heritage
- **INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS AND CORRIDORS**
  Strengthen Industrial Corridors and Planned Manufacturing Districts
- **EDUCATION AND LEARNING**
  Direct the growth of the Central Area's educational institutions and provide opportunities for lifelong learning
- **CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS AND TOURIST DESTINATIONS**
  Promote and strengthen the Central Area's world-class cultural assets

The substantial growth projected for the Central Area requires a development framework to ensure that it remains a desirable office address and is livable, convenient and attractive. The following sections describe a framework that organizes the general land uses found in the Central Area and the special uses that contribute to the area's vitality.

See Chapter 6 for an overview of how the development framework should be used to inform the City of Chicago's ongoing Zoning Reform project.

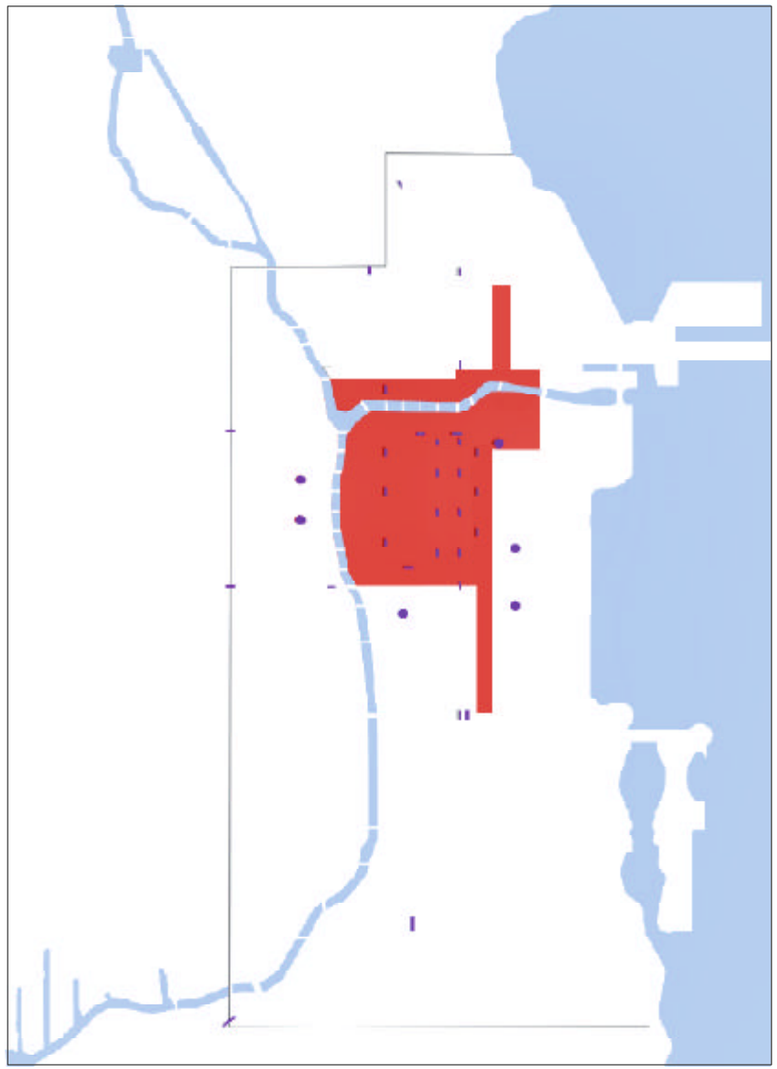


Figure 4.1.8a
The Higher-Density Zoning Defines Today's Loop

The Central Area's high-density mixed-use core should expand to the west and be framed by character districts

- Extend the high-density Loop to the west around transit opportunities
- Emphasize office, hotels & related commercial uses
- Emphasize active retail and commercial services at the street level
- Emphasize the Loop as a single, dense, walkable office core based on transit
- De-emphasize housing, except in the East Loop
- Explore minimum as well as maximum densities
- Minimize parking

The Expanded Loop
Landmark Districts
Character Districts
Metra Station
CTA Station

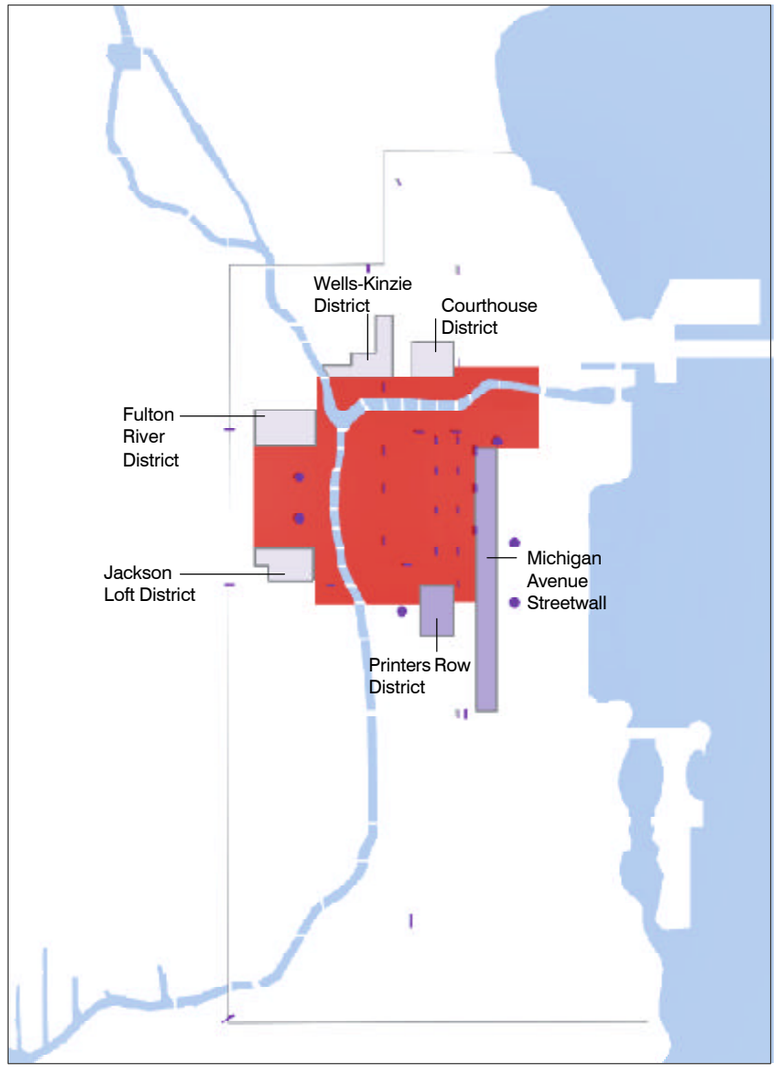


Figure 4.1.8b
The proposed Expanded Loop

The Expanded Loop

Extend the highest-density office core West to the Kennedy Expressway around the transit stations and the Chicago River

Key Recommendations:

- **Strengthen the Loop as a single, dense, walkable office core that is well-served by transit**
- **Emphasize office, hotels & related commercial uses in the West Loop and the Central Loop**
- **De-emphasize residential development in the Central Loop and the West Loop**
- **Promote mixed-use, cultural use and innovative adaptive reuse in the East Loop**
- **Promote historic preservation throughout the Loop**
- **Develop active retail and commercial services at the street level**
- **Emphasize the pedestrian environment**

Approximately 60% of new office development can be accommodated within the existing central Loop business district from Dearborn Street to the Chicago River. In order to accommodate and attract additional growth while retaining the advantages of a single, dense, walkable business district served by transit, the Loop will expand west to the Kennedy Expressway.

The development emphasis in the West and Central Loop will be office, ground floor retail, hotel and related commercial uses. Although the West and Central Loop are primarily intended to accommodate new office development, vertically mixed-uses will be encouraged. Single-use residential buildings will be deemphasized.

The growth of the Loop will be supported by increasing permissible densities in the West Loop. The expanded Loop will embrace the Chicago River. It will also be framed by historic areas: the recently designated Michigan Avenue Streetwall, Printer's Row, the Jackson and Fulton Loft Districts, the Wells-Kinzie District and the Courthouse District.

The emphasis in the East Loop will be mixed-use and smaller tenants. The City of Chicago is committed to preserving the area's historic buildings and districts and traditional east loop businesses.

Expansion of the high-density office core west of the river offers many advantages:

1. PROXIMITY TO THE WEST LOOP TRANSIT STATIONS

Most of the area between the river and the Kennedy Expressway is within easy walking distance of Metra commuter rail terminals and two CTA stations. Minimal investment in transit would be required to distribute workers. The West Loop's direct access from the Kennedy Expressway also strengthens its attractiveness as a strong Class A office address.

2. PROXIMITY TO THE EXISTING CORE

The compactness of the Loop has always been one of its great advantages as a place to do business - any point is within a short walk, bus or cab ride of any other point. Despite expansion, the Loop remains a more convenient place for meetings than suburban business centers and the downtowns of most other cities. The addition of the adjacent West Loop to the core would extend these efficiencies and competitive advantages while maintaining compactness.

3. COST-EFFECTIVE TRANSIT INVESTMENT

Chicago's century-old commitment to transit will continue. The high-density business district has the critical mass of workers needed to support convenient mass transit. The ability of mass transit to deliver large numbers of workers to the core in turn makes density viable.

4. EFFICIENT USE OF LAND

High densities are an efficient use of land, transit and infrastructure. The office growth projected for the next 20 years, 32 to 44 million square feet, will be accommodated in the approximately 1 square mile of the Expanded Loop. In comparison, if the amount of projected office growth were developed at typical suburban office densities (0.3 FAR), the office space alone would require at least 4 square miles of land. Additional land would be required to support the necessary infra-structure improvements.

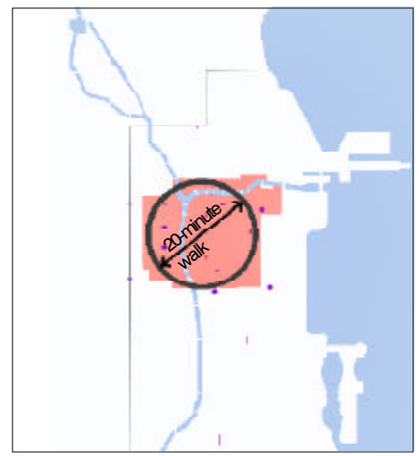


Figure 4.1.9
Pedestrians can cross the Expanded Loop in 20 minutes.

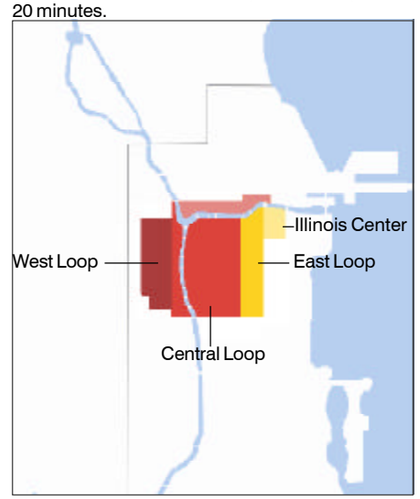


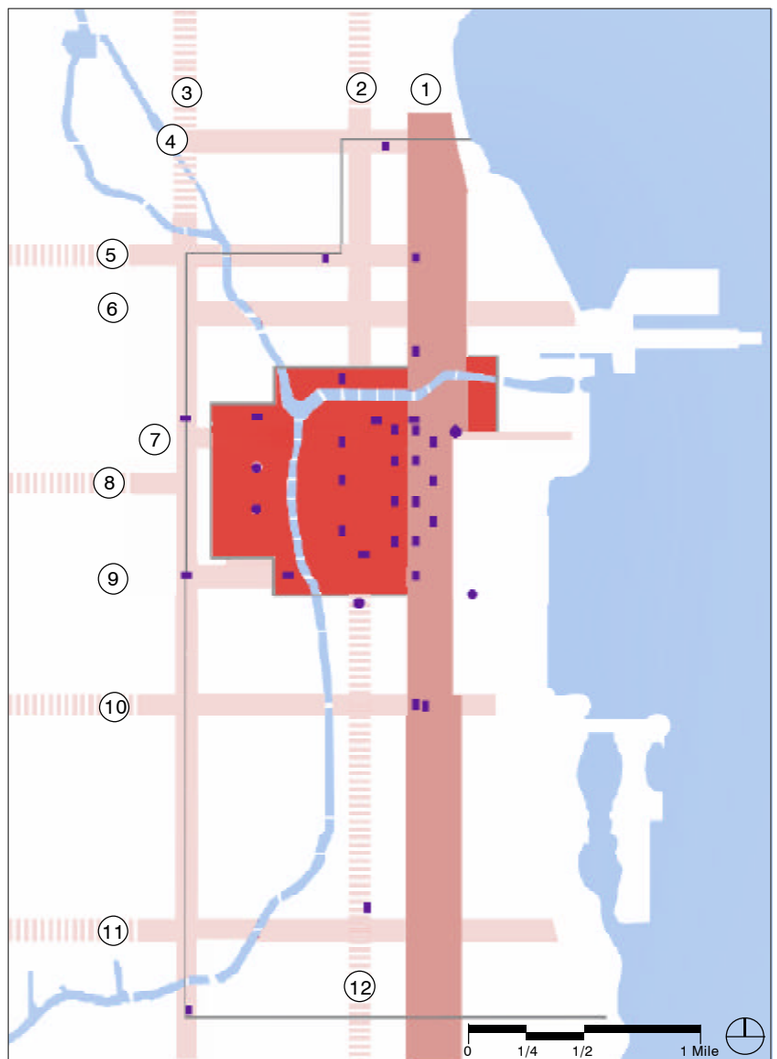
Figure 4.1.10
The Expanded Loop consists of the West Loop, the Central Loop, the East Loop, and Illinois Center.

Dense Mixed-Use Corridors

Figure 4.1.11
Dense, Mixed-Use Corridors will be a focus for new residential and retail development with secondary office and other uses. They will be community centers served by public transit.

PROPOSED CENTRAL AREA HIGH-DENSITY MIXED-USE CORRIDORS

1. Michigan-Wabash-State
2. La Salle Street
3. Halsted Street
4. Division Street
5. Chicago Avenue
6. Ohio - Ontario
7. Randolph Street
8. Madison Street
9. Congress Parkway
10. Roosevelt Road
11. Cermak Road
12. Future Wentworth Connection



Highest density corridor
High density corridors
The Expanded Loop
Metra Station
CTA Station

Develop high density, mixed-use corridors which extend throughout the Central Area

Key Recommendations:

- **Focus transit improvements along the major corridors**
- **Encourage the development of neighborhood serving retail along the corridors**
- **Focus higher density housing along the corridors**

Future growth will also be directed to high-density, mixed-use corridors outside the expanded Loop. The corridors will be served by CTA rail and bus transit systems and accommodate housing, retail, educational and cultural institutions, hospitality and some office activity. With their broad array of uses and activities in close proximity to one another, mixed-use corridors are quintessentially urban. Museums are down the street from shopping districts, and both are within walking distance of housing and offices. All support and enhance one another, adding a richness to the urban experience no single use could provide. This diversity is one of the Central Area's greatest assets, making it more vital and sustainable over time.

High density mixed-use corridors offer many advantages:

- **A SENSE OF PLACE FOR THE COMMUNITY.**
  High density corridors are a natural focus for the surrounding community, serving as gathering places and strengthening neighborhood identity.
- **PROXIMITY TO TRANSIT.**
  Mixed-use corridors generally focus on major streets and transit, a reflection of Chicago's street car and transit corridor history.
- **CONVENIENT ACCESS TO COMMERCIAL SERVICES.**
  The high density mixed-use corridors provide the opportunity for important retail nodes to adequately serve the needs of the community.
- **A CLEAR ORGANIZATION OF MIXED-USE AND RESIDENTIAL USES.**
  The corridors provide mixed-use development opportunities while the adjacent areas may be developed as single-use residential neighborhoods. This will permit residents to live on a quiet street within a short walk of convenient shopping and services.
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING.**
  Apartments and condominium buildings concentrate residents close to transit and to work.
- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR SECONDARY OFFICE GROWTH ALONG TRANSIT CORRIDORS.**
  Smaller scale office development can be directed to portions of the corridors to allow secondary offices to have easy access to services and transit and to allow people to work close to home.

Neighborhoods and Special Places

Support a diverse collection of livable neighborhoods and special places

Key Recommendations:

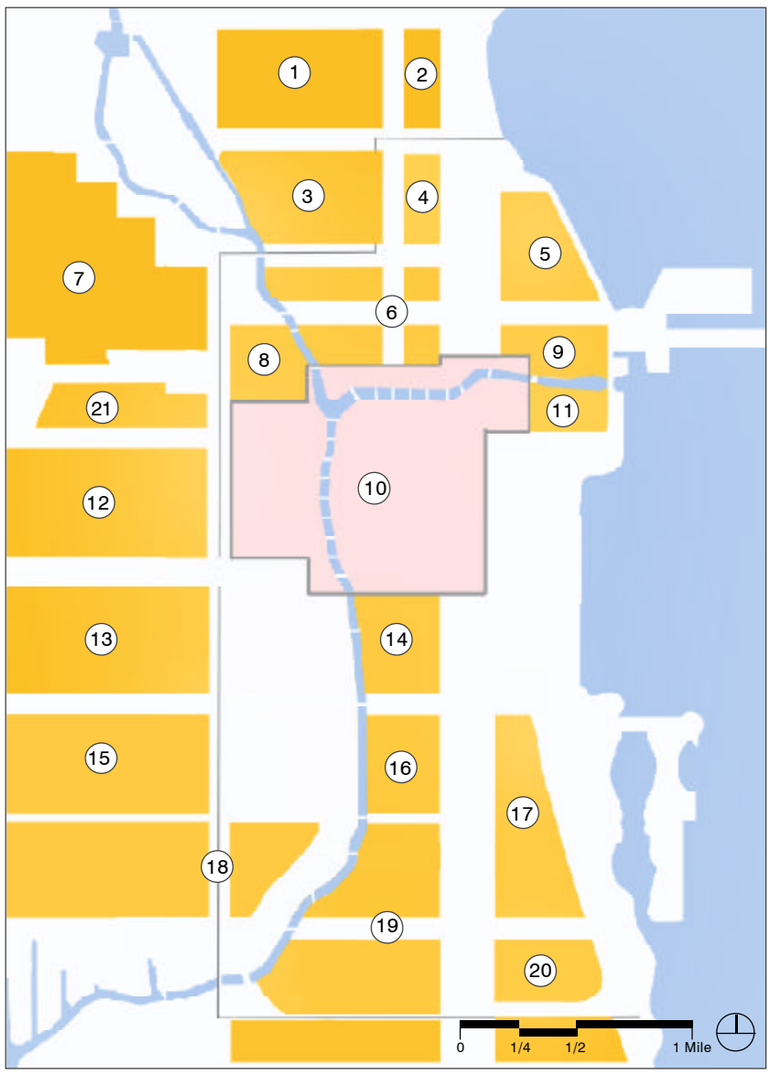
- **Ensure all neighborhoods will have convenient access to transit**
- **Ensure all neighborhoods are within walking distance to a commercial corridor**
- **Provide convenient access to open space, parks and recreation for each neighborhood**
- **Respect and enhance the existing character of each neighborhood**

The Expanded Loop and Mixed-use Corridors will be complemented by a diverse collection of residential neighborhoods and special Chicago places.

The variety of neighborhoods include existing stable neighborhoods such as Pilsen and Chinatown, emerging neighborhoods in the Near South, and opportunities for new neighborhoods along the south branch of the Chicago River and in the loft districts west of the Loop. The Central Area's neighborhoods will vary in density, use and physical form. Its special places will require the careful balancing of preservation with new development.

Central Area and Adjacent Neighborhoods

1. Old Town
2. Gold Coast
3. Cabrini Green
4. Near North
5. Streeterville and Northwestern
6. River North
7. Near Northwest
8. Fulton River District
9. Cityfront Center
10. The Expanded Loop
11. Lakeshore East
12. Near West Side and Greektown
13. UIC and Little Italy
14. Printers Row and Dearborn Park I
15. University Village
16. Near South and Dearborn Park II
17. Central Station and Prairie Avenue
18. Pilsen
19. Near South and Chinatown
20. McCormick Place
21. Kinzie Station



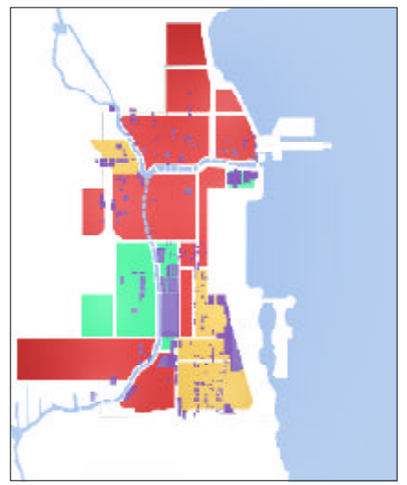


Figure 4.1.12
Stable, emerging and new neighborhoods in the Central Area with vacant land and underutilized sites.

- Stable Neighborhoods
- Emerging Neighborhoods
- New Neighborhoods
- Vacant and Underutilized Sites

Figure 4.1.13
Neighborhoods and Special Places

- Neighborhoods
- The Expanded Loop

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City of Chicago Landmark Districts
in the Central Area

1. Washington Square District
2. East Lake Shore Drive District
3. Old Chicago Water Tower District
4. Printers Row District
5. Michigan Avenue Streetwall
6. Prairie Avenue District
7. Motor Row District

Character Districts in the Central Area

8. Gold Coast
9. Gallery District
10. Wells-Kinzie District
11. Courthouse District
12. Fulton River District
13. Jackson Loft District
14. Prairie Avenue District
15. Chinatown District

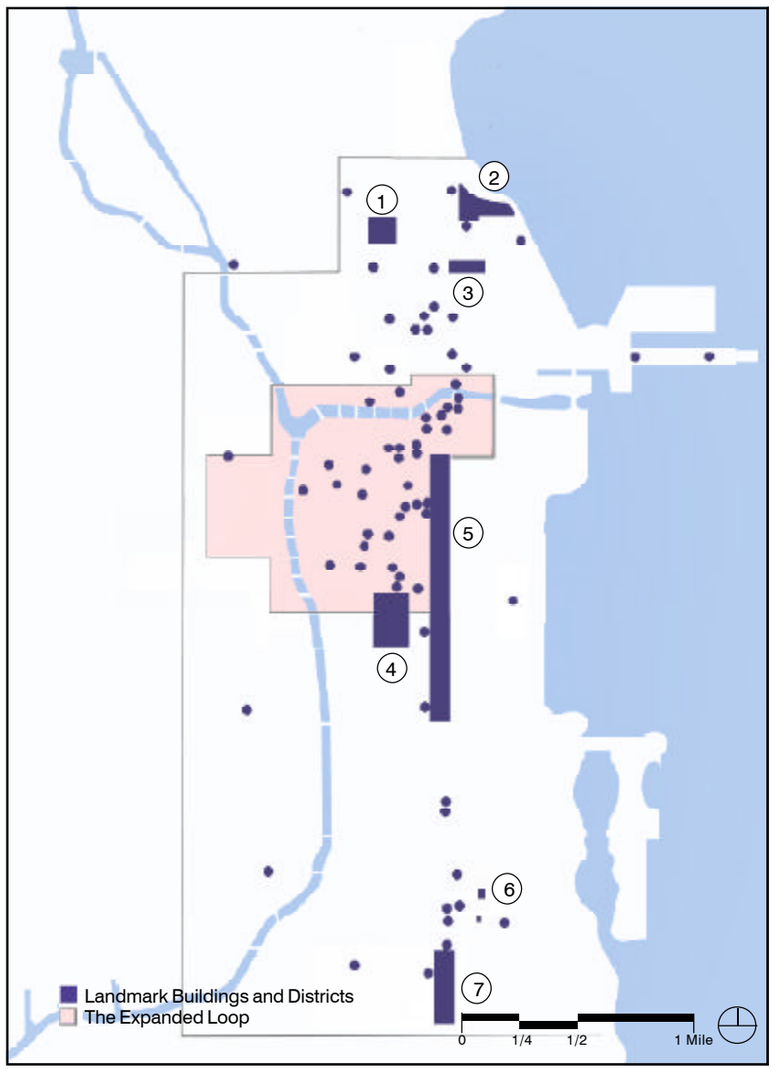


Figure 4.1.14
Landmark Buildings and Districts within the Central Area

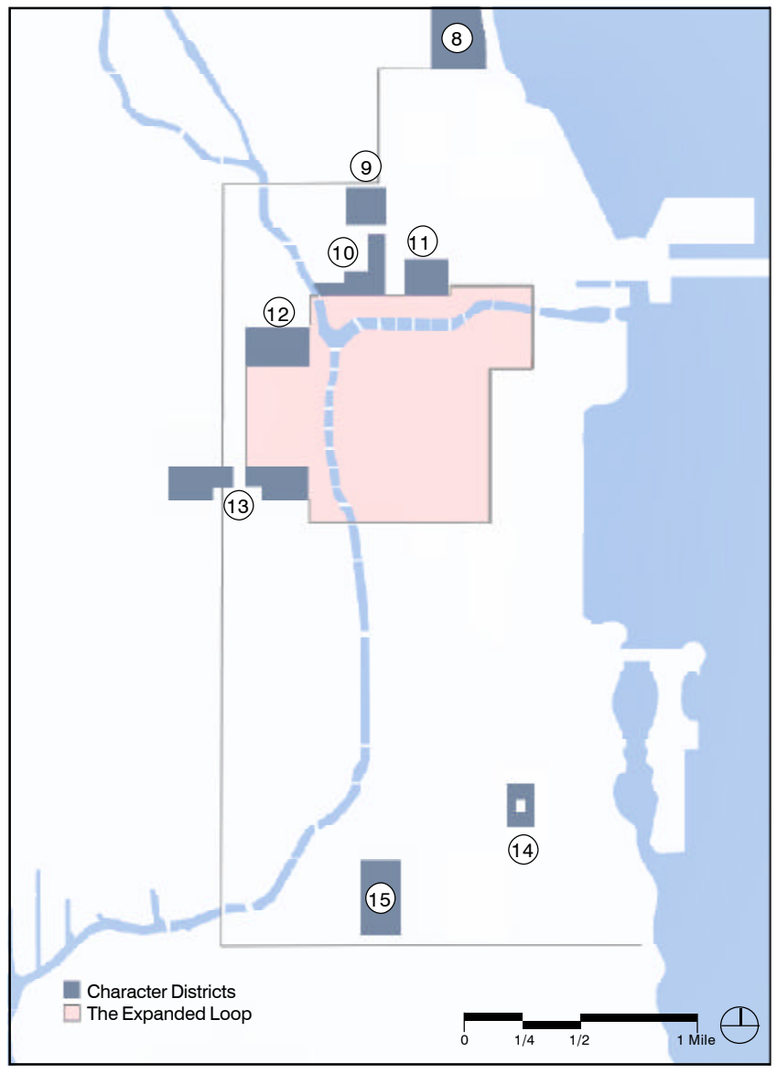


Figure 4.1.15
Character Districts within the Central Area

Landmarks and Character Districts

Preserve and strengthen the Central Area's world-renowned architectural and cultural heritage

Key Recommendations:

- Protect and preserve the most significant historic buildings and districts through landmark designation and economic incentives.
    - Protect the currently designated landmark buildings and districts in the Central Area.
    - Continue to designate the Central Area's most important landmark buildings and districts.
    - Protect significant buildings and districts that have been identified on the City's historic resources survey, are under study as potential landmarks, or are on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
    - Expand incentives to motivate owners to preserve and maintain historic buildings.
    - Educate building owners about the benefits of preservation.
- Strengthen and conserve character districts.
    - Establish and enforce appropriate densities, height limits, setback requirements and other zoning elements to preserve character.
    - Establish design guidelines for specific districts.
    - Lower the threshold for Planned Development review of projects in character districts.
    - Create incentives for building owners who sensitively rehabilitate buildings that contribute to character districts.

CHICAGO'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

Chicago's landmarks give form and texture to the Central Area and connect people to the achievements of past generations. The rich materials, street-level interest, human scale, exceptional ornament and superb craftsmanship of landmark buildings and districts contribute visual excitement to the urban environment and give Chicago's Central Area its special sense of place.

Chicago is the city that gave birth to the modern skyscraper, and its tradition of architectural innovation includes some of the world's tallest buildings. The bold skeletal frames of the Chicago School of Architecture, Louis Sullivan's exquisite ornament, the stately neoclassical designs that mark public and financial institutions, the geometry of art deco buildings, the expansive forms of modernism, the elegance of cultural spaces from Tiffany domes to exuberant movie palaces, and the smaller scale details of residential neighborhoods from Beaux Arts apartment buildings to Richardsonian Romanesque homes, make Chicago's Central Area a living museum of architecture that is known worldwide. Its historic buildings add immeasurably to the Central Area's quality of life, create great urban symbols, provide street level excitement and impressive interior public spaces, and attract visitors from around the world.

Preservation makes economic sense. It creates the quality of life that attracts businesses and visitors to the Central Area, and enhances property values. The economic benefits of heritage tourism are growing rapidly – travel industry surveys report that 40% of Americans make visiting an historic place part of their vacations, and that these travelers tend to spend 40% more than the typical visitor. A national study demonstrates that $1 million spent on rehabilitation will create more jobs and keep more money in the local economy than the same million dollars spent on new construction. Recent experience in Chicago shows that rehabilitating existing school buildings is $25 per square foot less expensive than constructing new schools.

Chicago must continue to be proactive in preserving Central Area Landmarks, and educate property owners and developers on the economic and environmental benefits of recycling historic buildings for new uses. Preservation will continue to be a major priority in Central Area Development.

CHARACTER DISTRICTS

There are numerous districts in the Central Area where design, scale, use and materials combine to create a distinctive identity. Character districts in the Central Area include the Gallery and Mart Districts in River North, the Courthouse District in the Near North, the Jackson Loft District in the West Loop and Chinatown in the Near South.

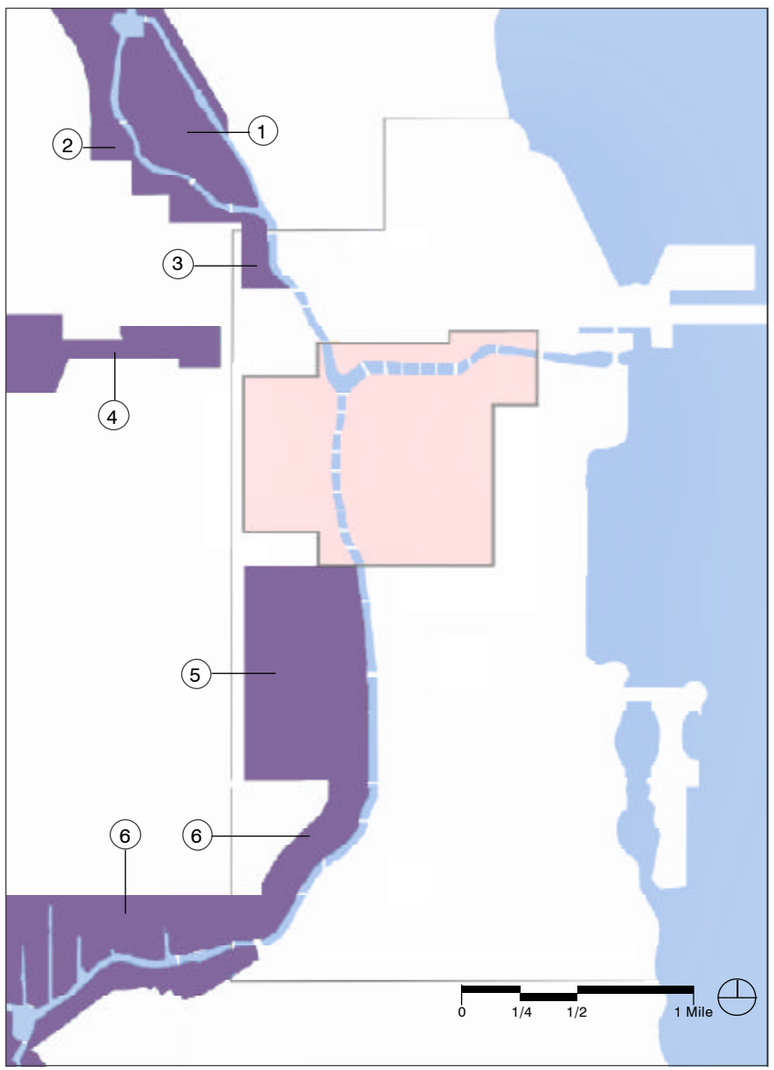
The distinctive features that give these districts their special character will be maintained as new development occurs. Design guidelines, zoning regulations, height limits, and lower thresholds for reviewing new projects as Planned Developments are tools for preserving the character that these districts contribute to the Central Area.

Industrial Districts & Corridors

Figure 4.1.16
The DesPlaines / Canal district (#5 on map) is buffered by the Dan Ryan Expressway on the west and railroad tracks on the east, and is an ideal location for warehousing, distribution and industrial use.

Central Area Industrial Districts and Corridors

1. Goose Island Planned Manufacturing District
2. The Elston Industrial Corridor Planned Manufacturing District
3. Chicago Halsted Planned Manufacturing District
4. The Kinzie Industrial Corridor
5. Southwest Loop Area
   The Des Plaines/Canal district south of Harrison Street
6. Pilsen Industrial Corridor



Industrial and Downtown Service Districts
The Expanded Loop

Strengthen Industrial Corridors and Planned Manufacturing Districts

Key Recommendations:

- **Maintain sufficient industrial land to service the downtown business core**
- **Maintain industrial and distribution jobs in the Central Area**
- **Improve transit access for employees**
- **Maintain good truck access for businesses and improve truck access from expressways to adjacent industrial sites**
- **Improve landscaping throughout these districts**
- **Emphasize innovative architecture for the next generation of industrial uses**
- **Distinguish these districts as complementary to the adjacent residential and business districts**

Warehousing, distribution, new industries and other industrial uses remain essential to the Central Area. An adequate supply of industrial land will be retained to maintain jobs and diversity of use. Planned Manufacturing Districts were created to define boundaries for industrial, distribution, warehousing and other uses. These and other special land use regulations will retain land for industrial uses and keep these necessary services close to the downtown office core.

Cultural Attractions & Tourist Destinations

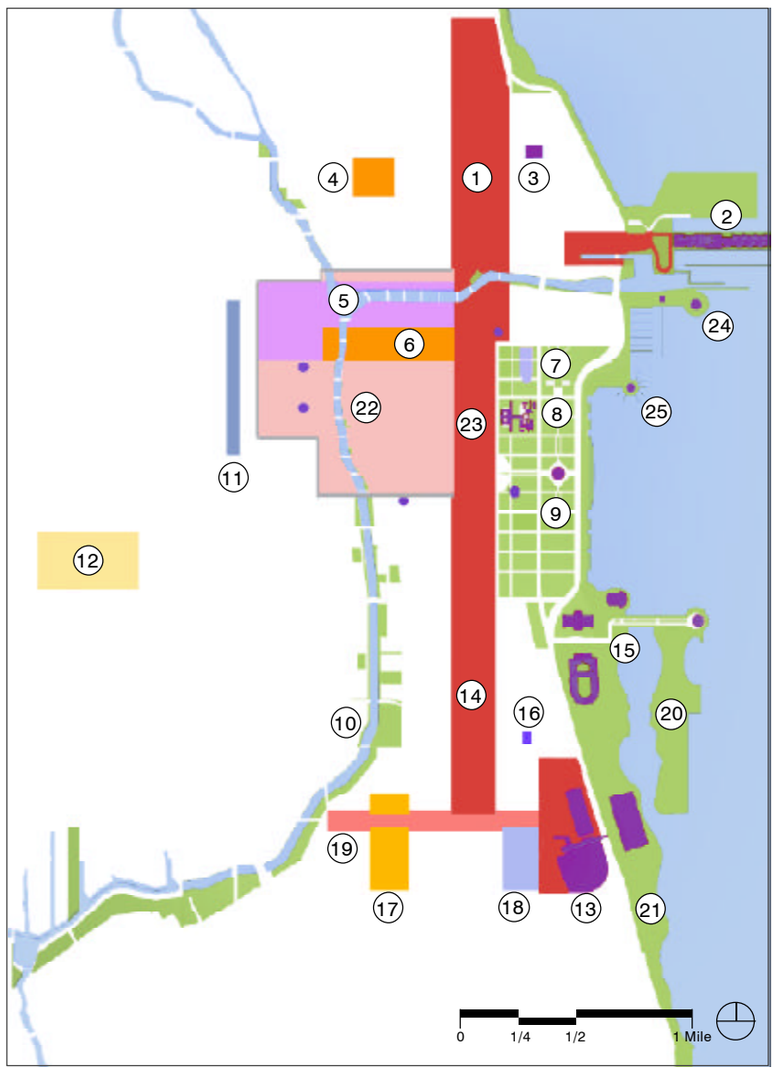
Promote and strengthen the Central Area's world-class cultural assets

Key Recommendations:

- **Improve transit connections between the Museum Campus, McCormick Place, Downtown, the airports, North Michigan Avenue, Navy Pier and major train stations**
- **Accommodate McCormick Place expansion to Indiana Street**
- **Integrate Motor Row with McCormick Place expansion through the development of dining, entertainment, hotels and conference facilities**
- **Develop Cermak Road as a mixed-use corridor connecting Pilsen, Chinatown, McCormick Place and the Lakefront**
- **Continue efforts to strengthen the Theater District**
- **Promote existing neighborhood cultural attractions and develop new ones**
- **Expand and complete Monroe Harbor**
- **Create Wacker Pier with a new museum**
- **Create a new public arts high school**

Central Area Visitor Destinations

1. Magnificent Mile
2. Navy Pier
3. Museum of Contemporary Art
4. River North Gallery District
5. Chicago River Main Branch
6. Randolph Street Theater Row
7. Millenium Park with Band Shell
8. The Art Institute
9. Grant Park
10. Chicago River Open Space / Ping Tom Park
11. Greek Town
12. Little Italy
13. McCormick Place
14. Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor
15. Museum Campus
16. Prairie Avenue Museums and Gardens
17. Chinatown
18. Motor Row
19. Cermak Road
20. Northerly Island Park
21. Burnham Park
22. Civic Opera
23. Symphony Center
24. Proposed Wacker Pier and New Museum
25. An Expanded Monroe Harbor



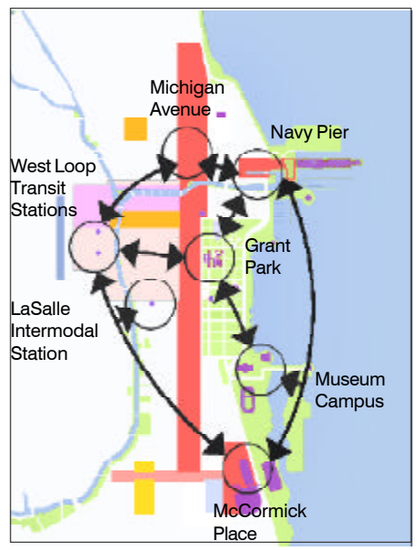


Figure 4.1.17
Transit improvements should conveniently tie the tourist destinations together

Figure 4.1.18
A strengthened framework of tourist destinations and visitor districts

- Visitor Districts
- Tourist Destinations
- Regional open space
- Amtrak and Metra Stations

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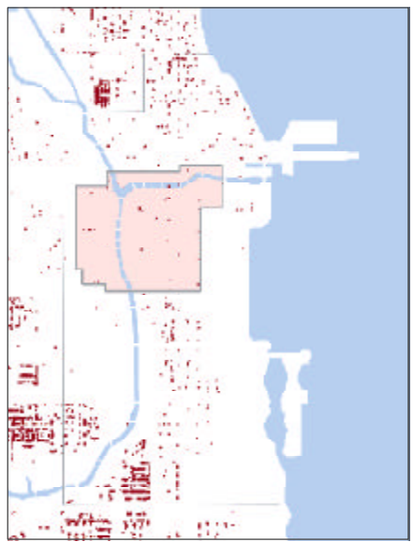

Figure 4.1.19
The distribution of Chicago Public School students in the Central Area

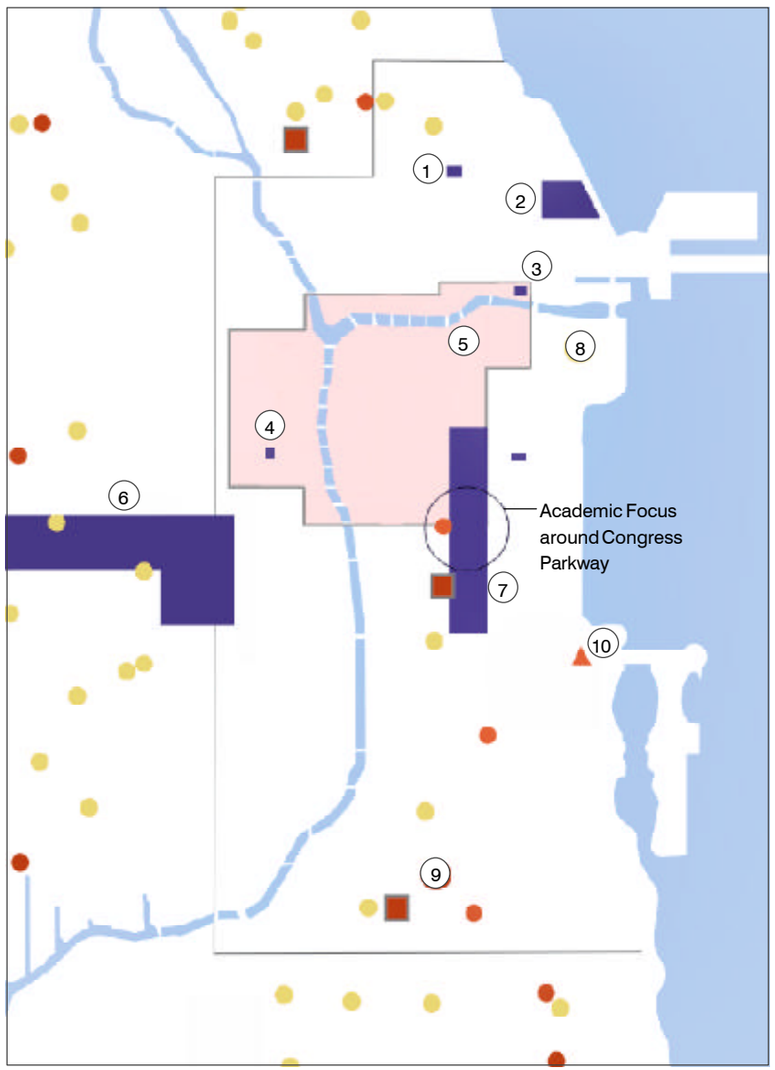

Figure 4.1.20
The Future of Education in the Central Area

- Higher Education Districts
- The Expanded Loop
- High Schools - existing
- High Schools - new
- Elementary Schools - existing
- Elementary Schools - new
- Museum Campus
- Library

Education and Learning

The Central Area will provide opportunities for lifelong learning

Key Recommendations:

- **Cluster higher-educational uses in the Near North and South Loop, with special emphasis around Congress Parkway and at U.I.C.**
- **Allow for future institutional growth in each of these three clusters**
- **Encourage shared uses between institutions including student housing**
- **Ensure institutional compatibility with neighborhoods**
- **Support primary and secondary education facilities in the Central Area**
- **View Central Area museums as learning environments that can play an active role in education**
- **Expand use of libraries as educational resources**

Central Area educational institutions include primary and secondary schools that service residents, higher education institutions, and alternative learning environments including museums, libraries and the Chicago Cultural Center.

The City should continue its efforts to strengthen the public school system, and primary and secondary schools should function as important neighborhood community centers. Higher education facilities in the Central Area contribute vitality by bringing students downtown, preserving buildings, providing innovative public programs and making learning accessible to downtown workers and residents. The city and the educational institutions should continue their collaboration to ensure the future growth of this valuable community asset.

The Central Area's museums and cultural institutions in collaboration with educational institutions, create learning environments for all ages.

Legend

Central Area Higher Education

1. Loyola University
2. Northwestern University
   Northwestern Memorial Hospital
3. University of Chicago
4. Illinois Institute of Technology
5. Harold Washington College
6. University of Illinois at Chicago
   and Medical Center
7. East Loop universities and colleges
   DePaul University
   Roosevelt University
   School of the Art Institute of Chicago
   National Louis University
   Robert Morris College
   Columbia College
   John Marshall Law School
   East-West University
   Aurora University

Central Area New Schools

8. Lake Shore East Elementary School
9. Teacher's Academy - Cermak
   Elementary and Teacher's Academy

Additional Learning Environments

10. Museum Campus

Chapter 4 : THEME 2

Transportation

Strengthen connections to keep the Central Area easy to reach and get around

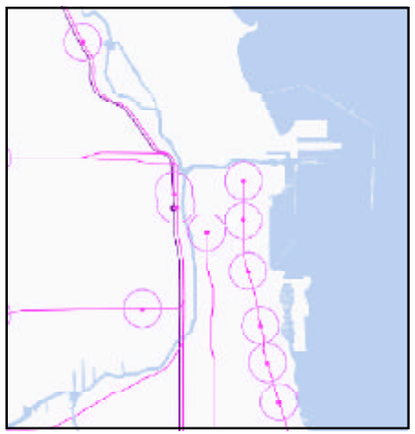

Figure 4.2.1
Promote region-wide transit investments. Metra commuter rail provides service to the east, south and west of the Loop.

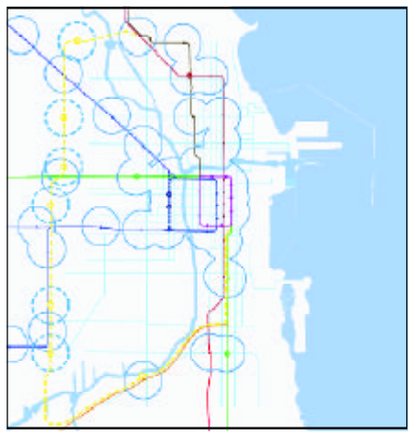

Figure 4.2.2
Much of the Central Area is within 5 minutes walk of a CTA station.

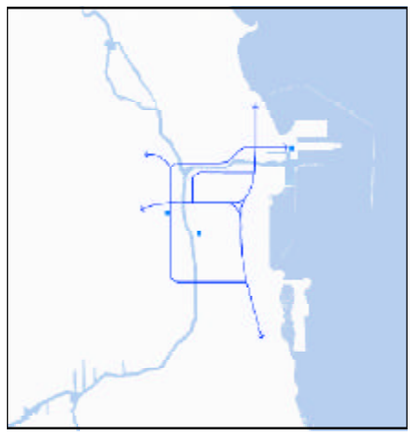

Figure 4.2.3
Preserving rights-of-way is critical to providing new transit services.

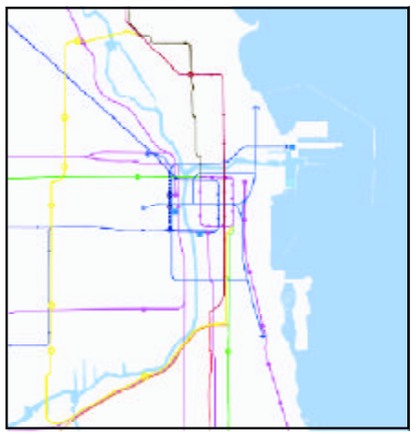

Figure 4.2.4
Convenient connections between all modes will be required.

Key for Figure 3.2.5
Development Framework
- Highest Density Loop and Corridors
- High Density Corridors
- Neighborhoods

Transit Infrastructure
- Existing Blue Line
- Existing Subway and "L"
- Regional Rail
- Clinton Street Subway
- Clinton Busway
- Monroe Busway
- Carroll Busway
- Lakefront Busway

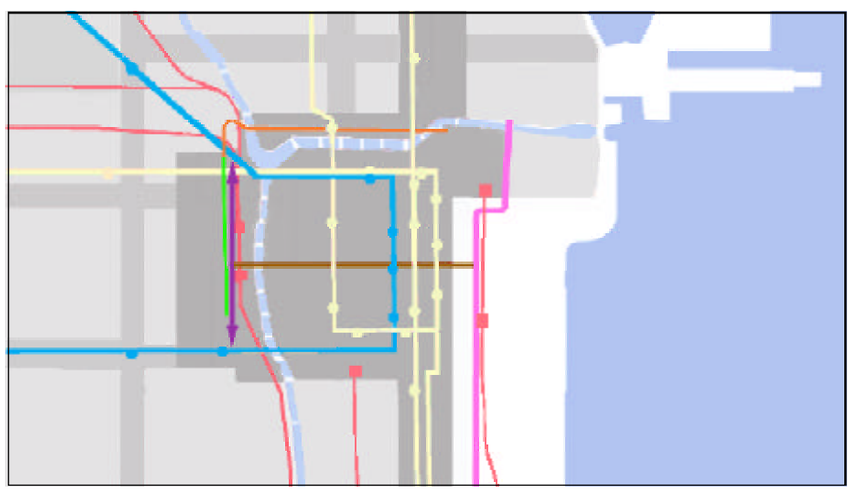

Figure 4.2.5
Central Area transit improvements will provide improved service to the Expanded Loop.

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Theme 2:
Transportation and Access

Strengthen connections to keep the Central Area easy to reach and get around

Guiding Principles

- **CENTRAL AREA TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS**
  Make transit the first choice for people coming to the Central Area
- **WALKABLE CITY**
  Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment
- **TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**
  Efficiently manage traffic circulation and parking to prevent gridlock
- **ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION**
  Encourage alternative modes such as bicycles and water taxis
- **METROPOLITAN AREA EXPANSION PROJECTS**
  Increase CTA and Metra capacity to bring workers to the Central Area.
- **MIDWEST AND NATIONAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS**
  Improve national and international connections.

Central Area Transit Improvements

Key Recommendations

- Exclusive transitways will reduce congestion and offer rapid circulation
- A new West Loop Transportation Center will create an additional transportation hub
- Transit modernizations and enhancements will improve accessibility and comfort.

Make Transit the first choice for people coming in to the Central Area

Transit systems in the Central Area and throughout the metropolitan area must be upgraded to meet the challenge of bringing the projected 188,000 to 272,000 new downtown workers to the expanded Loop. Mass transit is the only practical means of efficiently moving large numbers of future workers to and around the Central Area.

Central Area transit improvements will be built in those areas of the expanded Loop slated for the highest density. The improvements will be built in phases as development progresses, but all will eventually be required as the expanded Loop reaches the projected build-out. All necessary rights-of-way must be preserved to permit implementation at the appropriate time.

Figure 4.2.6
The future Carroll Avenue Transitway, looking from LaSalle Street towards the Merchandise Mart, showing the connection to the Brown and Purple Line CTA trains.

Figure 4.2.7
A new generation of transit vehicles will offer energy efficient and comfortable transit on dedicated transitways that reduce congestion and travel times.

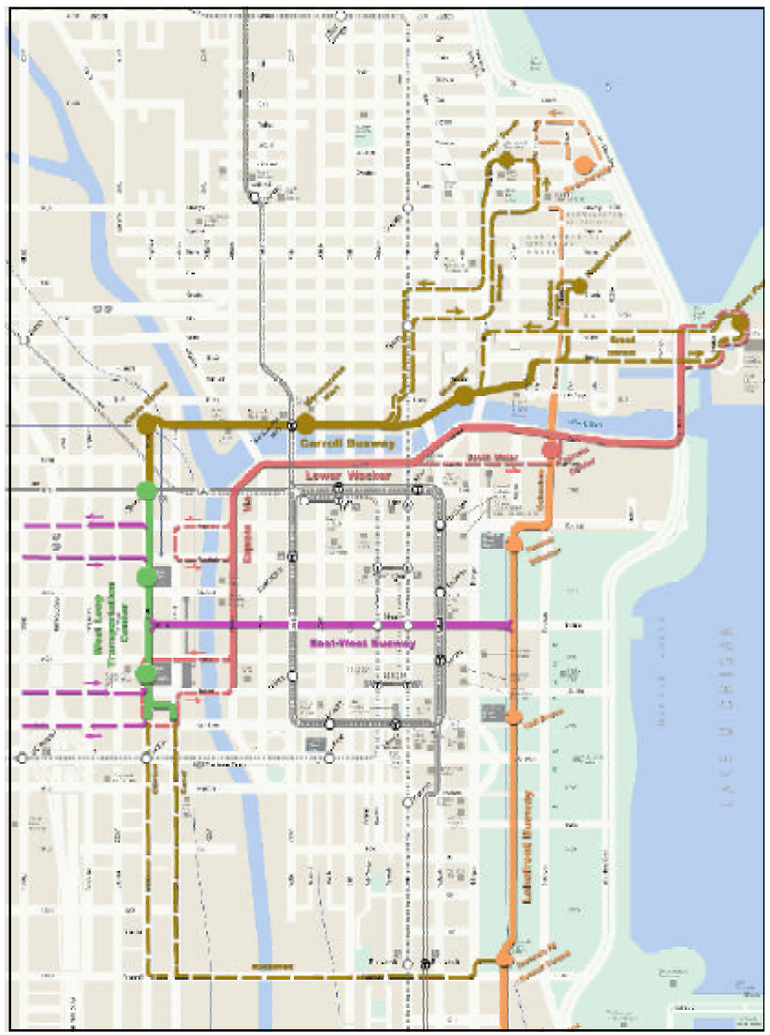

Figure 4.2.8 The future transitway system

Transitways

Exclusive transitways will ensure efficient transit circulation regardless of street congestion

Buses are relatively inexpensive and flexible and will remain an important element of the downtown transportation system. To ensure the continued viability of the bus system, many Loop-bound routes could operate in dedicated transitways, either at or below grade, in the Central Area. The proposed exclusive transitways will provide essential service to CTA and Metra stations. On heavily traveled routes it may be desirable to use high-capacity "bus rapid transit" (BRT) vehicles. BRT vehicles can carry as many as 120 passengers - more than double a standard bus. BRT vehicles use multiple wide doors and low floors to permit fast boarding of passengers who have previously paid their fares at a transitway station. Ultimately, the transitways may be served by light rail. The use of exclusive transitways offer numerous advantages:

- **NO SLOWDOWNS -** The exclusive right-of-way enables buses to maintain schedules regardless of street traffic conditions. Since transitways have multiple lanes and do not require fixed guideways, service can easily be routed around stalled vehicles.
- **LOW COST -** Since no tracks or power distribution equipment are required, transitways can be built for a fraction of the cost of rail.
- **FLEXIBLE ROUTING -** Although the transitway itself is fixed, buses exiting at portals en route complete their journeys via ordinary streets. This permits great flexibility in routing and minimizes the need for transfers.
- **INCREMENTAL CONSTRUCTION -** Transitways can be built in phases and use conventional streets to provide continuous service.
- **MINIMAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT -** Buses do not require overhead wires or tracks and clean-fuel alternatives are available.
- **NO SPECIAL VEHICLES REQUIRED -** Ordinary buses can be operated in transitways if desired. "Clean fuel" vehicles with minimal emissions will reduce the need for expensive or unsightly transitway ventilation.
- **PRE-BOARDING FARE COLLECTION AND WEATHER-PROTECTED PLATFORMS -** Transitway stations can be similar to rail rapid transit stations, with pre-boarding fare payment. Platforms can be heated, lighted, and weather-protected and provided with trip planning and tourist information kiosks displaying bus arrival times.
- **CENTRALIZED DISPATCHING AND CONTROL. -** Advanced real-time location capabilities, service management software and voice/data communications between bus operators and dispatchers would enable precision performance of scheduled service.
- **CONVERSION TO RAIL -** If downtown growth requires added capacity in the future, transitways can be converted to rail operation.

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The Central Area's first busway is the Lakefront Busway, which links McCormick Place with Illinois Center and Streeterville hotels. Buildings on its success, four new transitways are proposed:

LOWER WACKER DRIVE EXPRESS BUSES

Express bus service will be reintroduced to Lower Wacker Drive following the completion of the Wacker Drive reconstruction. Bus priority measures will be provided at key intersections leading to Wacker Drive from both Union Station and Ogilive Center and on-ramps accessing Lower Wacker to provide more reliable service.

CARROLL AVENUE TRANSITWAY

The Carroll Avenue transitway will use a grade-separated railroad right-of-way along the line of Carroll Avenue north of the Main Branch between the west bank of the Chicago River to Rush Street. It will eventually link to the Clinton transitway and will substantially improve travel times between the West Loop and River North, North Michigan Avenue, Streeterville, and Navy Pier. It will provide two dedicated bus lanes, one in each direction. The Carroll Avenue transitway is a prime candidate for "bus rapid transit" (BRT) vehicles. Daily scheduled service will shuttle riders between the West Loop commuter stations via the Clinton transitway to offices and shopping north of the river, and to Navy Pier for special events. A transfer will be provided from the Brown/Purple Line station at the Merchandise Mart to the transitway station below.

EAST-WEST TRANSITWAY

CTA buses currently use eastbound lanes on Washington and Adams and westbound lanes on Madison and Jackson. These lanes are affected by vehicles making right turns at cross streets and by vehicles exiting driveways, extending travel times for bus riders and discouraging transit use. As a first step, these on-street bus lanes will be upgraded through improved signal timing, streetscape enhancements and other amenities. An exclusive transitway may be created at the street level, in the short term, on Adams and Monroe Streets.

If warranted by future traffic growth, a below-grade transitway could be built on Monroe Street to improve east-west bus times through the Loop. This below-grade transitway would make use of a right-of-way reserved by the City for a potential east-west subway in the 1970's. It would extend from Michigan Avenue to Clinton Street, crossing the Chicago River via tunnel. Portals would permit buses to enter and exit at Michigan Avenue and at Clinton. A connection could also be provided to the existing South Lakefront transitway to McCormick Place.

Buses operating in the East-West transitway could be primarily existing line-haul routes that currently use Loop streets. Convenient connections could be provided to the State and Dearborn subways below. Escalators and elevators would transport riders between platform and street level, with bus waiting times displayed on electronic signs. The platforms could be extended to create a continuous pedway between Michigan Avenue and Union Station, with connections to the existing pedway. As a first step, this right-of-way may also be developed as a pedway.

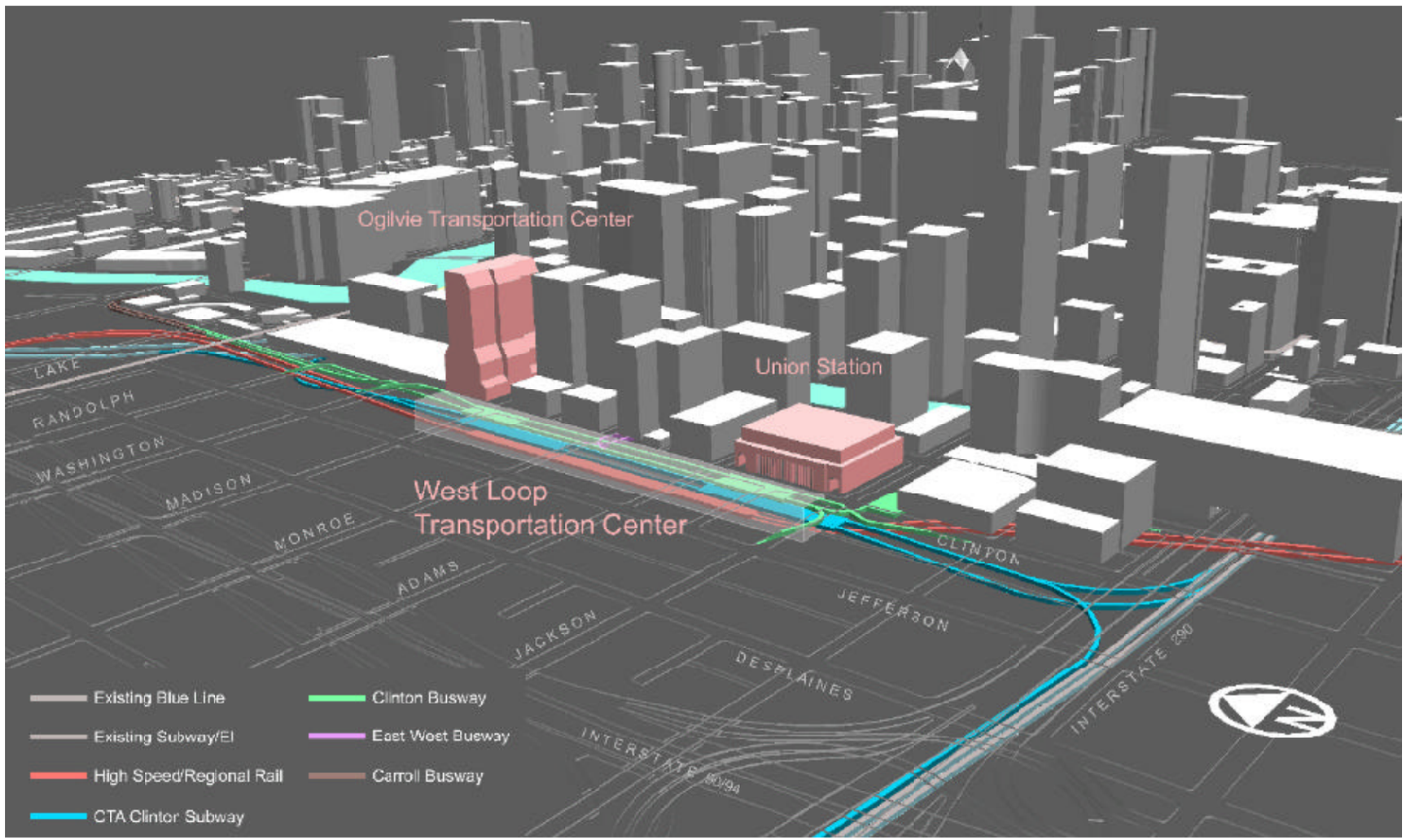
CLINTON CORRIDOR

The Clinton transitway will be provided as part of a multi-level bus/rail subway under Clinton Street, described in the following section.

Figure 4.2.9
The future East-West transitway under Monroe Street.

Figure 4.2.10
The future East-West transitway on Adams Street.

Figure 4.2.11
The proposed West Loop Transportation Center along Clinton Street between the Ogilvie Transportation Center and Union Station has the potential to connect all parts of downtown, provide the Expanded Loop with excellent transit access, and provide platforms to serve high-speed rail.



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West Loop Transportation Center

A new transit hub under Clinton Street will provide the West Loop office district with the same convenient, high-volume transit service that supported the growth of the Central Loop.

A new transportation center is proposed under Clinton Street, called the West Loop Transportation Center. The development of the Clinton Street transitway, CTA rail services, commuter and high-speed rail lines can be phased. The construction of a shell for a multi-level tunnel in the initial phase will result in substantial long-term construction cost savings and simplify the eventual completion of the West Loop Transportation Center.

The Transportation Center will have four levels:

1. Mezzanine
2. Transitway
3. CTA Rail
4. Commuter and Intercity Rail

TRANSITWAY
A dedicated transitway connected to the Monroe Street transitway with portals at Randolph, Washington, Jackson, and Van Buren streets. Short- and line-haul routes would use this route. Line-haul routes crossing the Loop via the Monroe Street transitway would enter and exit the transitway system via portals on Clinton Street. Short-haul routes serving River North and Streeterville would exit via the north portals, cross the river south of Kinzie Street, and enter the Carroll Avenue transitway en route to their final destinations.

CTA RAIL
Two options follow for connecting the West Loop to the other parts of the Central Area and the CTA rail network.

OPTION A - BLUE LINE LOOP
The Blue Line Loop would create a second transit loop in the Central Area. The two existing CTA Blue Lines, the Congress/Douglas Park branches and the O'Hare branch would be connected via a branch below Clinton Street. Two stations would be provided, one at Union Station and the other at the Ogilvie Transportation Center. Clinton Street is the ideal alignment for this purpose because it is adjacent to the rail stations and also has no major underground utilities that would complicate construction.

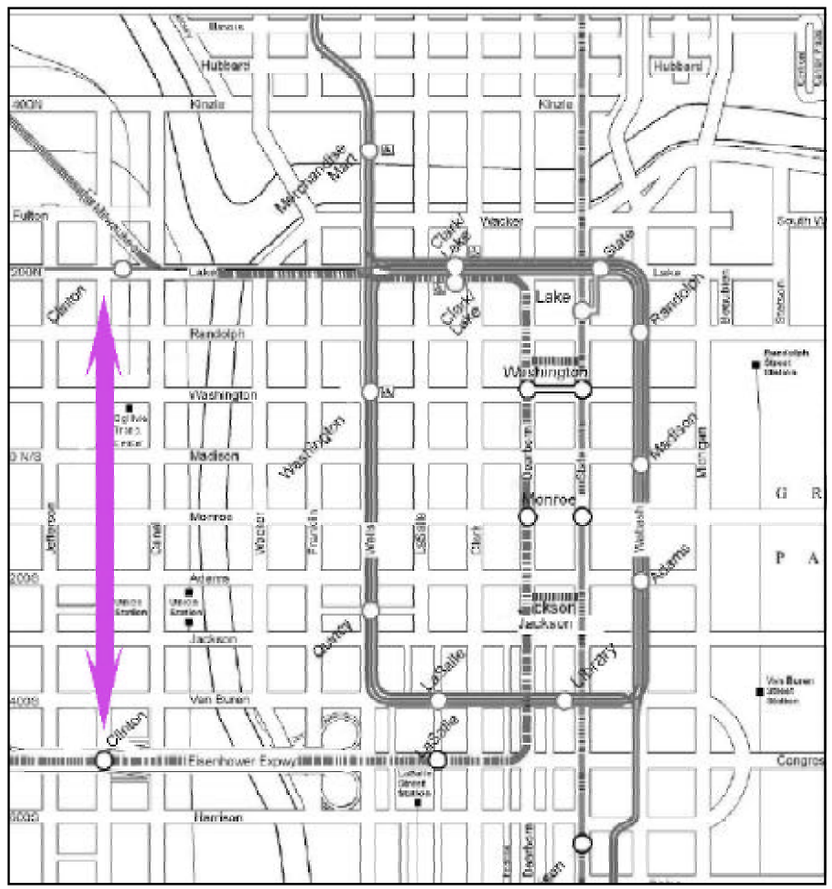

Figure 4.2.12
CTA improvements centered on the Clinton Street transitway would include either a Blue Line loop, connecting the Congress/Douglas and O'Hare branches; or a connection to the Red Line.

Figure 4.2.13
The proposed West Loop Transportation Center, a multi-modal facility to provide access throughout the Central Area and improve high-speed inter-city connections.

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The Blue Line Loop would provide the West Loop with fast, convenient rail service comparable to that available in the Central Loop. Passengers on any of the Blue Line branches would have direct access to Clinton Street stops. Passengers entering the Central Area on other CTA rail lines would be able to change to Blue Line trains at existing Loop transfer points. The two proposed stations are within easy walking distance of the entire portion of the West Loop identified for higher-density development. The Blue Line Loop would also provide better distribution of commuter rail riders to the east side of downtown and other points on the Blue Line, including the University of Illinois at Chicago, the Medical Center, and O'Hare Airport.

OPTION B - CTA RED LINE CONNECTOR

The middle level could also be used by a new Red Line route extending for several miles in a north-south subway. This would provide direct connections to the West Loop from the north and south. It would provide additional capacity in the State Street subway for other services. This concept requires further feasibility studies.

COMMUTER AND INTER-CITY RAIL

The lowest level of the West Loop Transportation Center will provide two through platforms for commuter and intercity trains entering from either the north or south. The development of through platform connections will realize a plan to connect north and south railroad lines first identified in Burnham's Plan of Chicago in 1909. The platforms will provide overflow capacity for Union Station and the Ogilvie Transportation Center, both of which are approaching their train-handling capabilities. The platforms could also serve as the downtown terminal for the proposed high-speed regional rail system which uses Chicago as the hub and links major midwestern destinations using trains operating at 100+ MPH.

Figure 4.2.14
The West Loop Transportation Center - mezzanine entrance level will feature convenience retail serving commuters.

Figure 4.2.15
The West Loop Transportation Center - CTA Rail level, where passengers would access the new Blue Line loop or the new Red Line connection.

Figure 4.2.16
CTA modernizations and enhancements

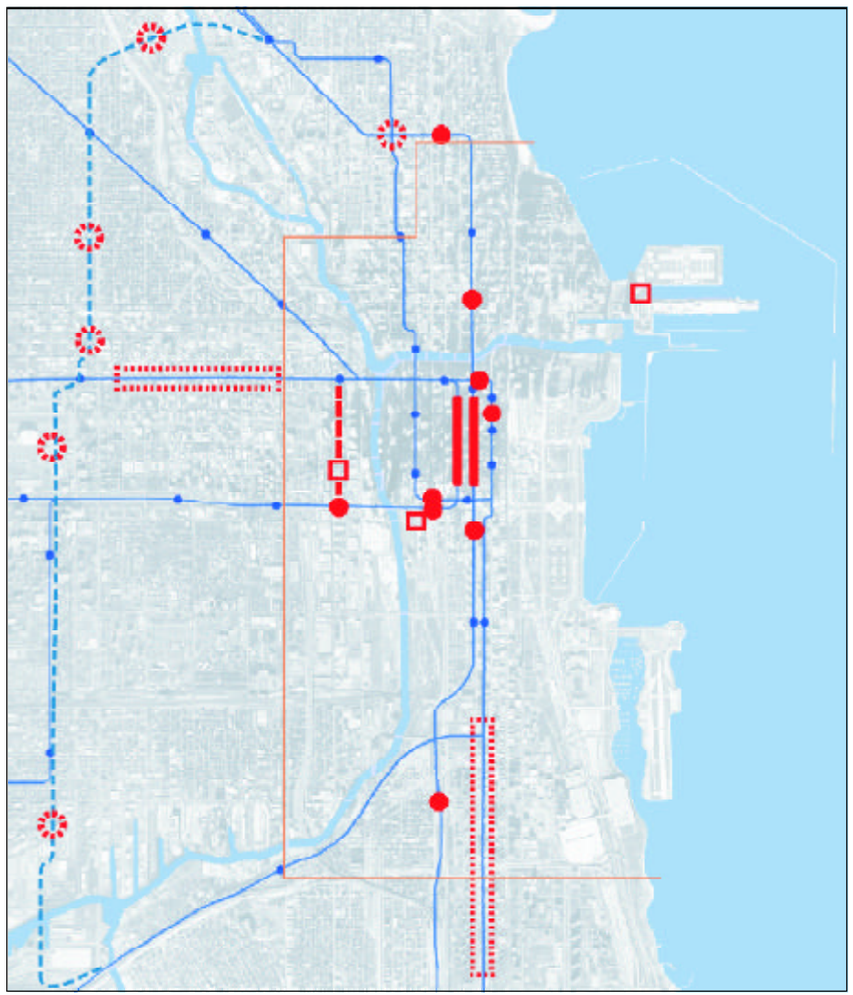

Figure 4.2.17
Enhanced intermodal bus connections at La Salle Street Station will mean that commuters no longer need to walk several blocks to board buses.

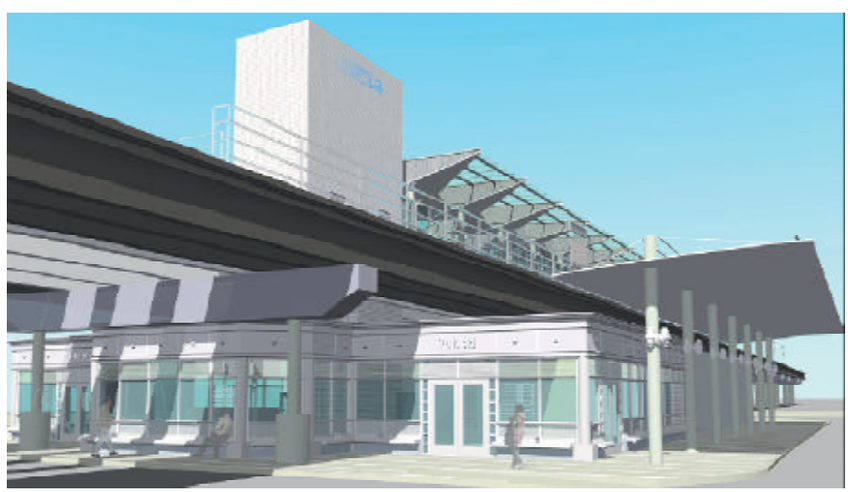

Figure 4.2.18
Rapid Transit Stations will be renovated to improve accessibility, create spacious mezzanines and platforms, and improve customer information.

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Transit Modernizations and Enhancements

Existing downtown transit facilities in the Expanded Loop will be renovated and new facilities will be built to improve accessibility and comfort.

Transit modernizations and enhancements include:

- **NEW CIRCLE LINE**
  The Circle Line will link all existing CTA and Metra lines, providing better transit linkages and improved access to the periphery of the city center. Much of the line will incorporate existing tracks and stations.
- **CTA STATION IMPROVEMENTS**
  Stations and platforms will be renovated to improve accessibility, provide more spacious mezzanines and platforms, and improve information to transit customers.
- **NEW STATIONS**
  New stations may be built on the Green Line to serve growing residential neighborhoods in the south and west. New stations in the Loop will be designed in the historic spirit exemplified by the existing Harold Washington Library Center and Quincy Street stations.
- **REBUILDING OF METRA ELECTRIC RANDOLPH STREET TERMINAL**
  The Randolph Street Terminal is being rebuilt to provide better passenger service.
- **INTERMODAL TRANSFER FACILITY AT LASALLE STREET STATION**
  Metra commuters arriving at La Salle Street Station must walk several blocks to board buses. To overcome this problem, an intermodal transfer facility for CTA buses will be provided using an existing parking lot immediately west of the station.
- **ACCESSIBILITY**
  All new and renovated facilities will comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). All transit stations will be wheelchair accessible. The use of low-floor bus rapid transit vehicles will greatly enhance accessibility by persons in wheelchairs and reduce the need for lifts.

Figure 4.2.19
The Metra Electric Randolph Terminal is being reconstructed to provide better passenger service to the East Loop, Millenium Park and Illinois Center.

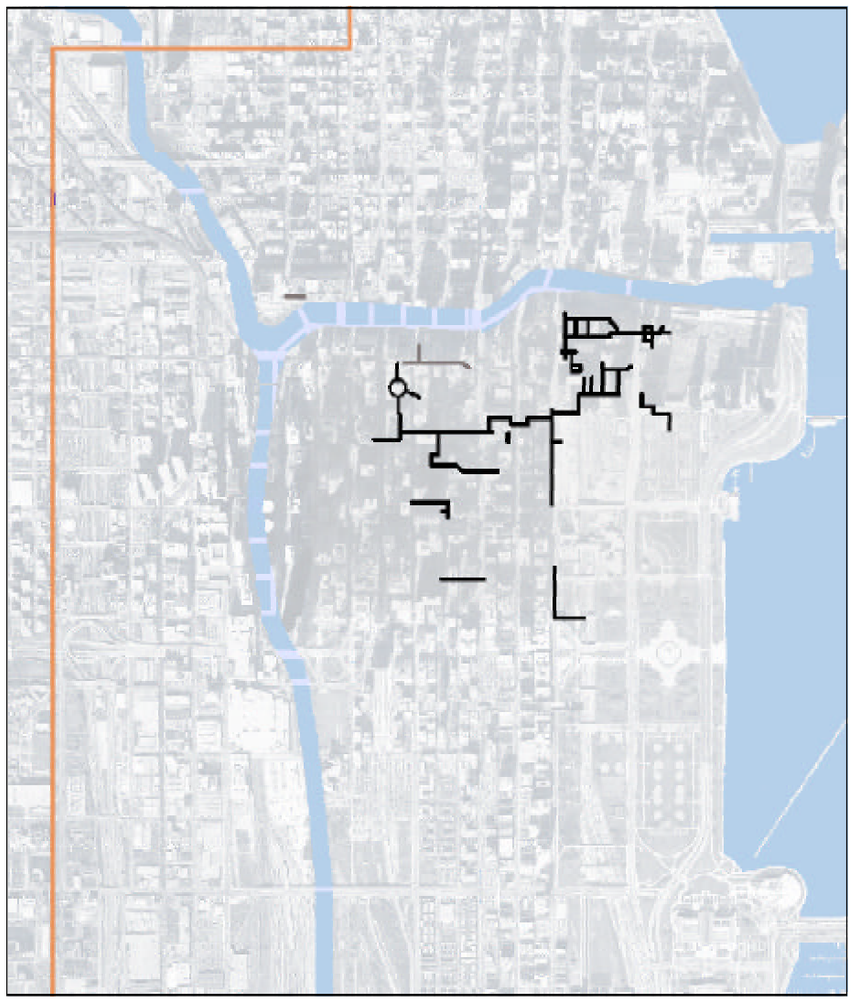

Figure 4.2.20
The existing pedway system

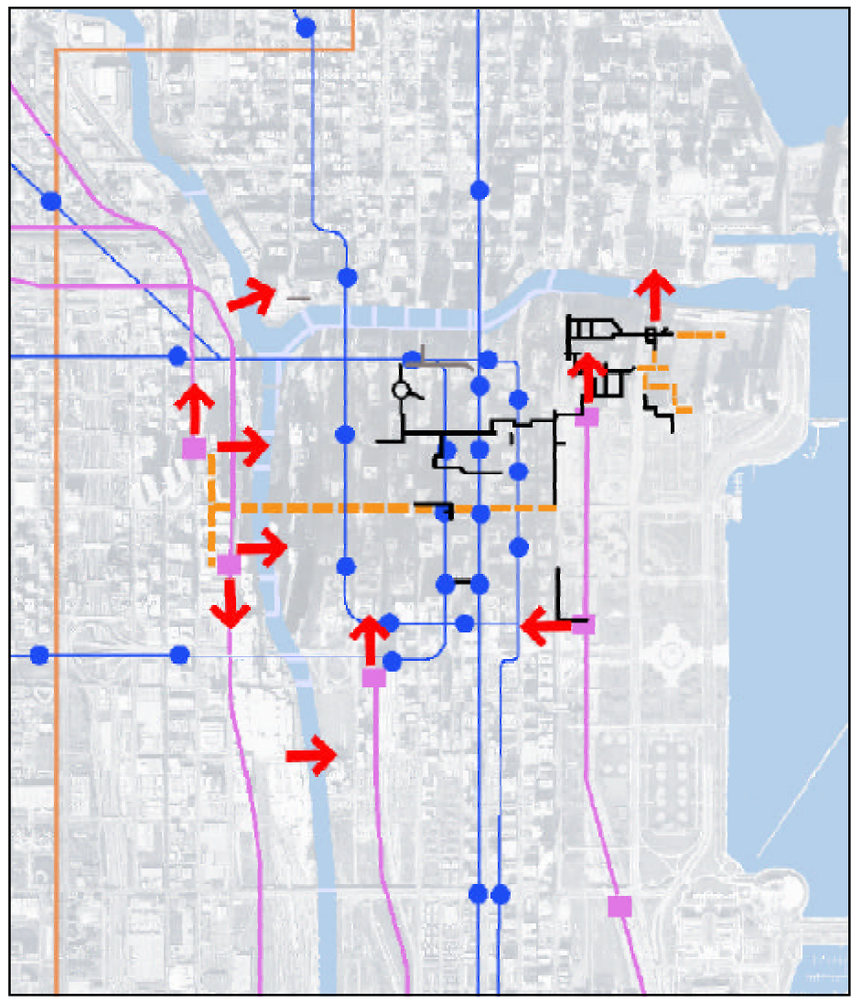

Figure 4.2.21
Pedestrian improvements will help to overcome physical barriers such as the Chicago River.

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Walkable City

Improve the Quality of the Pedestrian Environment

Key Recommendations:

- **Improve and extend sidewalk landscaping**
- **Encourage active street level uses, especially retail, in all buildings including parking structures.**
- **Ease pedestrian congestion by expanding the pedway system, riverwalk and footbridges, and by enhancing sidewalks.**

The Central Area's walkability is one of the things that makes it great. Many of its streets have generous sidewalks, attractive landscaping and lighting, and active ground floor uses such as stores that offer light and activity to the passerby. The walkability of the Central Area is part of its appeal, but also key to its efficiency: sidewalks are a city's most efficient transportation system, carrying up to four times as many people as vehicles on the same streets.

The pedestrian environment cannot be taken for granted. All streets in the Central Area should maintain pleasant sidewalk environments. Buildings that line them should have active street-level uses, well articulated and transparent facades, and frequent entrances at the ground floor. Parking garages should also have active uses at the street level. Surface parking lots should be avoided in the expanded Loop. In other parts of the Central Area they should be landscaped to obscure the break they create in the pedestrian environment. The number of driveways and curb cuts should also be limited in the Central Area to prevent conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

Sidewalks close to commuter rail and rapid transit have become increasingly congested. The following projects are proposed to ease pedestrian congestion:

- **FOOT BRIDGE OVER THE CHICAGO RIVER**
  A pedestrian bridge will be constructed over the Chicago River between Adams and Jackson streets to improve Union Station pedestrian circulation.
- **RIVERWALK**
  A continuous riverwalk will be constructed to provide an alternative to crowded Central Area sidewalks.
- **PEDWAY EXPANSION**
  The grade-separated pedway system in the heart of the Central Area will be expanded to provide easier access to rapid transit stations. This may include a Monroe Street pedestrian way.
- **SIDEWALK ENHANCEMENTS**
  New sidewalks adjacent to new office buildings and other developments will be designed to provide adequate space for peak flows, provide stronger landscaping, and reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles caused by curb cuts.

Figure 4.2.22
Keeping the downtown compact and walkable with appealing sidewalks supports the quality of life and efficient circulation that are keys to the Central Area's economic success.

Figure 3.2.23 - 25
"Level of service" refers to traffic flow, with Level 'A' having the smoothest flow. The Level of Service decreases as congestion increases, with Level F being the most congested.

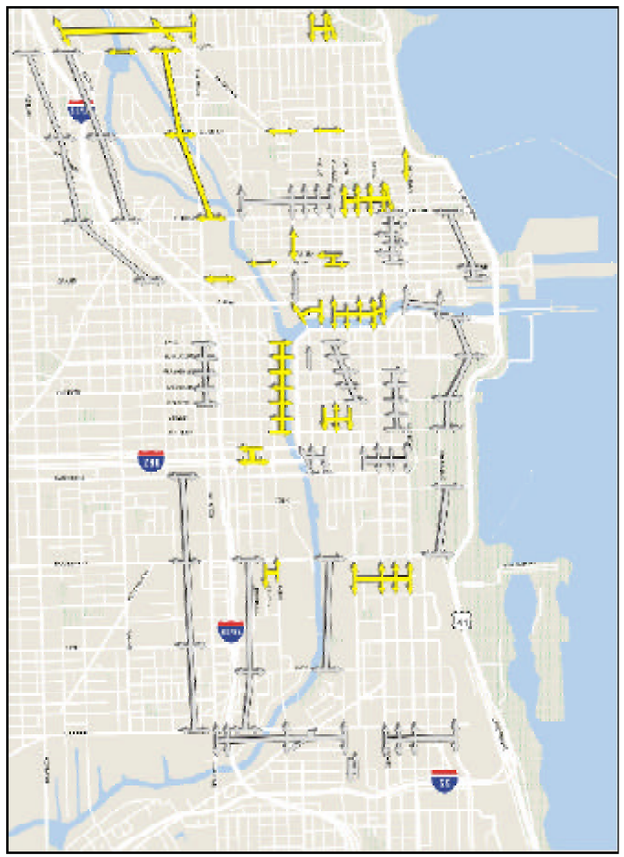

Figure 4.2.23
Levels of service at key intersections in the Central Area today.

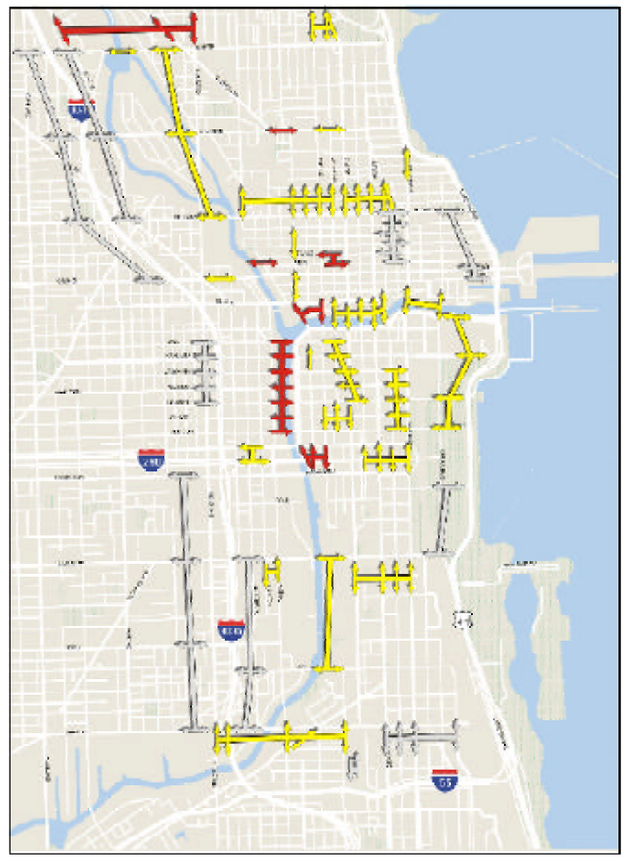

Figure 4.2.24
Levels of service at key intersections in 2020 under the base growth scenario, with added parking in the Loop.

Figure 4.2.25
Levels of service at key intersections in 2020 under the base growth scenario, with no parking added in the Loop.

Level of Service 'F' at least once a day
Level of Service 'E' at least once a day
Level of Service 'A' thru 'D' all day

Cordon of Streets with direction of traffic

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Traffic Management

Efficiently manage traffic circulation and parking to prevent gridlock

Key Recommendations

- **Improve traffic signaling to control gridlock**
- **Maximize off-street truck loading and delivery**
- **Expand the grid system where possible, and maintain alleys and limit cul-de-sacs to ensure efficient circulation**
- **Limit parking in the Central Loop to minimize traffic congestion**

While transit will be emphasized, growth will generate an estimated 56,000 new auto trips per day by 2020. The roadway system serving the Central Area is already built out with limited opportunity to build new roads. The geography that gives downtown Chicago its special character - its location between the river and lake - also limits automobile access as the capacity of the Central Area's famous bridges cannot be expanded. While there are opportunities to expand the street grid in the Near South Side, north of Congress Street there are few opportunities for additional streets.

The challenge for development in this context of limited roadway capacity is that the mix of uses that gives Chicago its vibrant character, also tends to require easy access to parking at multiple locations. The goal of the plan is to strike a balance between efficient circulation on roadways with limited capacity, and convenient parking access.

Street and Traffic Improvement Projects

- *Traffic Management Center*
  A new Traffic Management Center (TMC) on the Near West Side will monitor and control traffic signals throughout the Central Area and, in the future, citywide. TMC operators will use video cameras, street sensors and computers to coordinate signal timing and keep traffic moving efficiently and safely.
- *West Loop and Streeterville Signal Interconnects*
  The interconnected Central Area traffic signal system will extend beyond the Loop to the West Loop and Streeterville. This system will be tied to the TMC and will reduce delays at intersections.
- *South Branch Bridges*
  Bridges across the South Branch will be constructed at Polk, Taylor, and/or 16th streets.
- *Truck Loading*
  The growth in office, retail and other development will increase truck loading and deliveries. To maintain efficient traffic circulation in view of this challenge, the City will require a comprehensive policy regarding truck loading and deliveries. A major study will evaluate this issue.
- *Expand the Grid System*
  As the South Loop and Near South grow, existing streets will be extended and new alleyways added. In particular, the Wells - Wentworth connector will be a Near South neighborhood collector street, linking these new east-west streets to the Loop and Chinatown. Throughout the Central Area, existing alleys and streets will not be vacated or cul-de-saced to maintain continuity and efficient circulation.

Parking Policy

Establish appropriate limits on non-accessory parking. Existing policy restricts non-accessory, free standing garages and reduces the number of parking spaces required in new development within the inner core of the Central Area Parking District. This area begins half a block inside the Loop elevated structure. The outer core of the Central Area Parking District discourages surface parking lots.

The policy offers several advantages:

- It encourages commuters to use transit rather than private autos, increasing traffic efficiency in the core, reducing auto congestion and air pollution.
- It makes maximum use of developable land and ensures that the business core remains compact, one of downtown Chicago's major competitive advantages.
- It minimizes conflicts between pedestrians and buses with automobiles using parking facilities.

Managing New Parking

If additional parking is developed to accommodate growth, traffic models project that rush hour gridlock will occur at key points in the Central Area, including most bridges. To avoid this, it will be necessary to control the total number of Loop parking spaces by further restricting non-accessory parking structures and directing most of the additional parking to areas outside the Loop. There will also be opportunities for parking within the Expanded West Loop near the expressways.

Parking Structure Design

Any new parking structure in the downtown must adhere to the design guidelines outlined in the Chicago Parking Garage Ordinance. A parking garage should be designed to respect its surrounding context with regard to materials, scale, proportion and orientation of openings. The ground floor of the structure should have active uses such as retail and lobby functions, and should incorporate canopies, clear glazing and special lighting to add interest at the sidewalk level. Curb cuts and driveways ought to be minimized to allow for pedestrian movement; and alley access is recommended, if possible.

A study addressing traffic and parking issues in the Central Area is currently underway. The study has four components:

· Determining the unique parking and transit needs of specific user groups and different Central Area districts.

· Developing a comprehensive picture of parking and transit trends and issues.

· Developing summary estimates of parking and transit needs, and outlining strategy and policy alternatives for transportation in the Central Area.

· Researching the range and type of available funding strategies for proposed transit improvements.

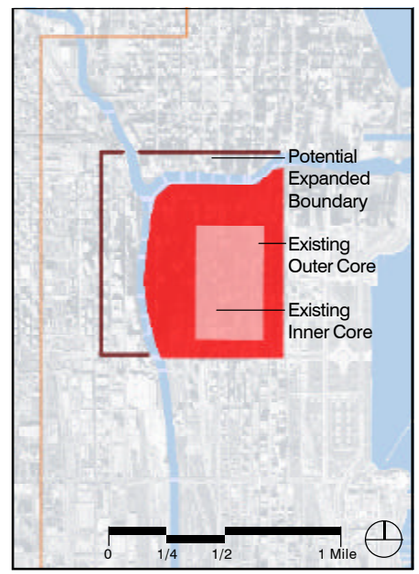
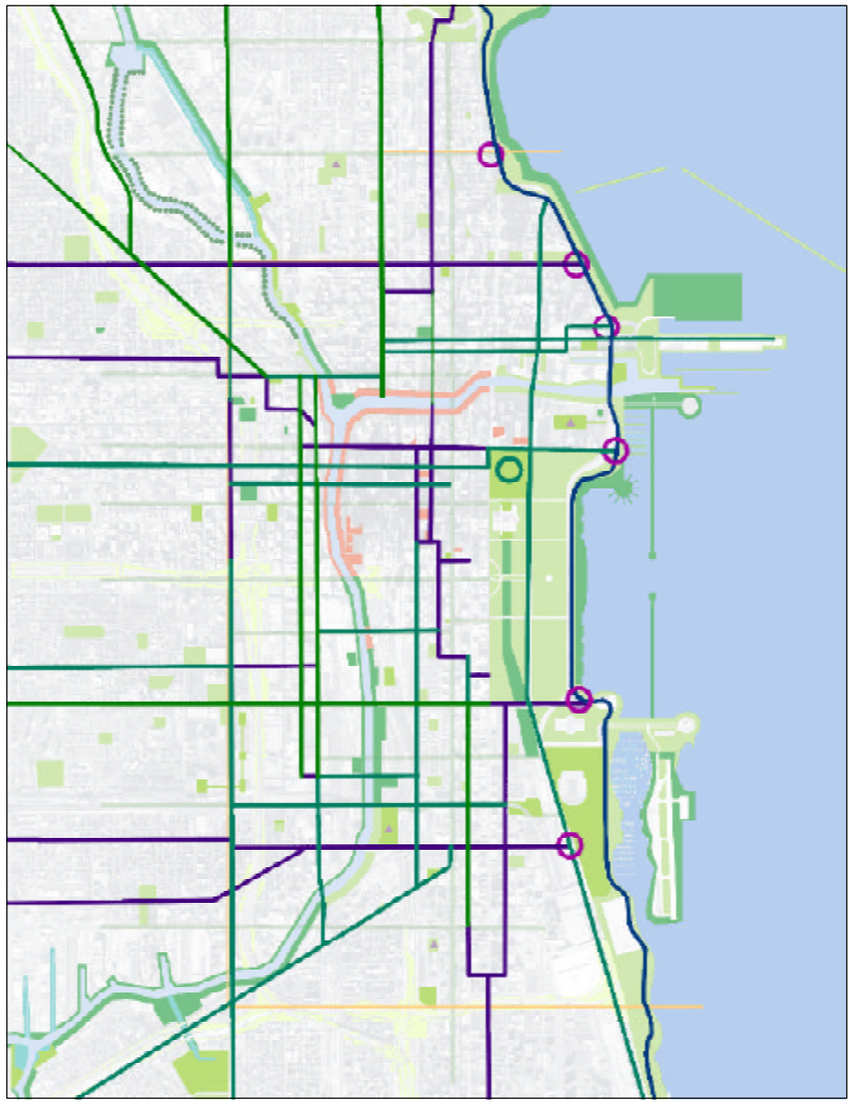


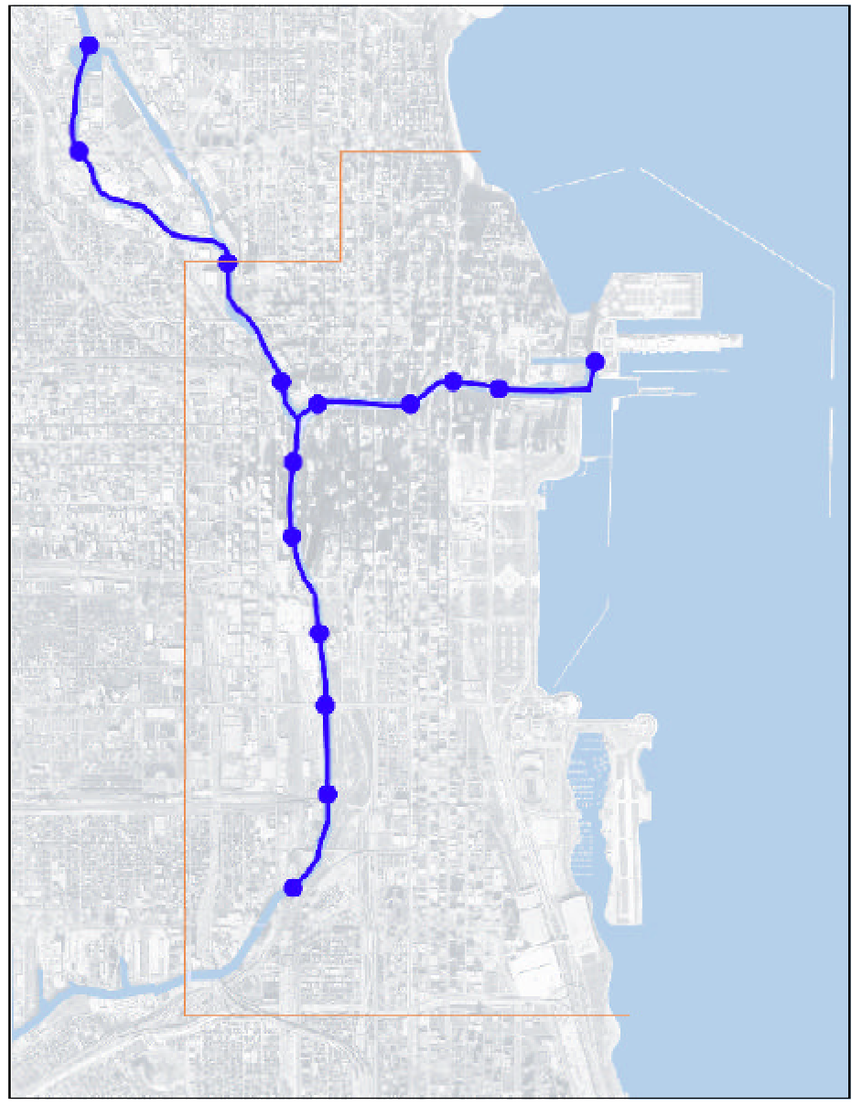
Figure 4.2.26
Growth will bring an estimated 56,000 new cars to downtown per day. Road capacity is limited, and in order to prevent gridlock it will be necessary to establish limits on non-accessory parking in the Expanded Loop.



Key for Figure 3.2.27
- Bicycle Lanes - Existing
- Bicycle Lanes - Proposed
- Bicycle Routes
- Bicycle Paths - Off Street
- Lakefront Access
- Lakefront Bike Station

0 1/4 1/2 1 Mile

Figure 4.2.27
The existing and proposed Bicycle Path System



0 1/4 1/2 1 Mile

Figure 4.2.28
The future Water Taxi System

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Alternative Transportation

Encourage alternative modes such as bicycles and water taxis

Key Recommendations:

- **Expand and improve the network of bicycle paths**
- **Expand the water taxi system to provide a commuting alternative**

Bike paths and water taxis will primarily be used in warm weather months. These commuting alternatives provide a great outdoor experience amid the bustle of the Central Area. They reduce demand on other transit systems that may be carrying increased numbers of summer tourists and visitors to special events. Cycling rather than driving offers the added benefit of cleaner air on what may be summer Ozone Action Days. There is enormous potential for cycling in the Central Area. There are hundreds of thousands of people living within 3 miles, a 20 minute bicycle ride, of the Central Area.

BIKE PATHS AND W ATER TAXIS OFFER A PLEASANT COMMUTING ALTERNATIVE

BICYCLE PATHS

The proposed Central Area bikeway system includes special pavement markings and signage on selected streets and the well known bicycle paths through the Lakefront parks. A bicycle station with bicycle parking, showers and lockers, will be provided in the West Loop and at Millennium Park.

To create a continuous connection for pedestrians and cyclists a new bicycle/pedestrian bridge over the Chicago River's Main Branch east of Lake Shore Drive known as the DuSable Flyover will be constructed. This will enable pedestrians and bicyclists to travel from the north Lakefront bicycle path, through the Navy Pier/DuSable park area, to the Lakefront path south of the river without having to cross any streets, creating a connection between Navy Pier, Monroe Harbor and Museum Campus.

South of the Museum Campus, a greenway constructed on the St. Charles Airline parallel to 16th Street will provide access from the Lakefront to the Chicago River and neighborhoods in the Near South and further west.

WATER TAXIS

Water taxis, like the riverwalk, can provide excellent alternative transit between commuter rail and downtown office and cultural destinations. Water taxi system improvements will consist primarily of docks at key embarkation points. The docks shown in the diagram are for illustrative purposes only; actual locations will depend on river traffic management considerations and the willingness of riverside property owners to participate in the program. Water taxis are subject to city regulations but are operated by private owners. Fares and schedules may be coordinated with the other transit systems in the Central Area.

Figure 4.2.29
Bicycling in the Central Area will increase as a viable form of commuting. Hundreds of thousands of people live within a 20 minute bicycle ride of the Central Area. Cycling can reduce emissions, reduce demand on transit, and provide exercise.

Figure 4.2.30
Water Taxis on the Chicago River provide convenient access to the West Loop transit stations.

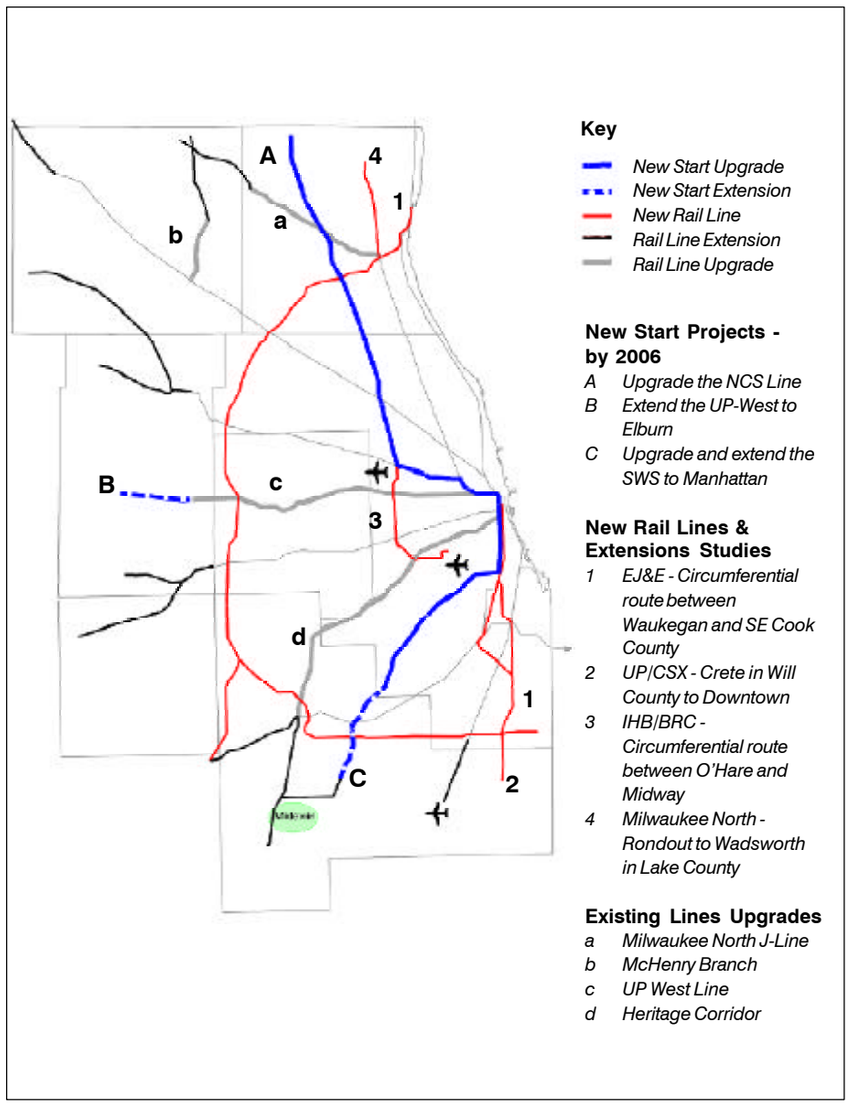

Figure 4.2.31
Potential Metra Extension Projects

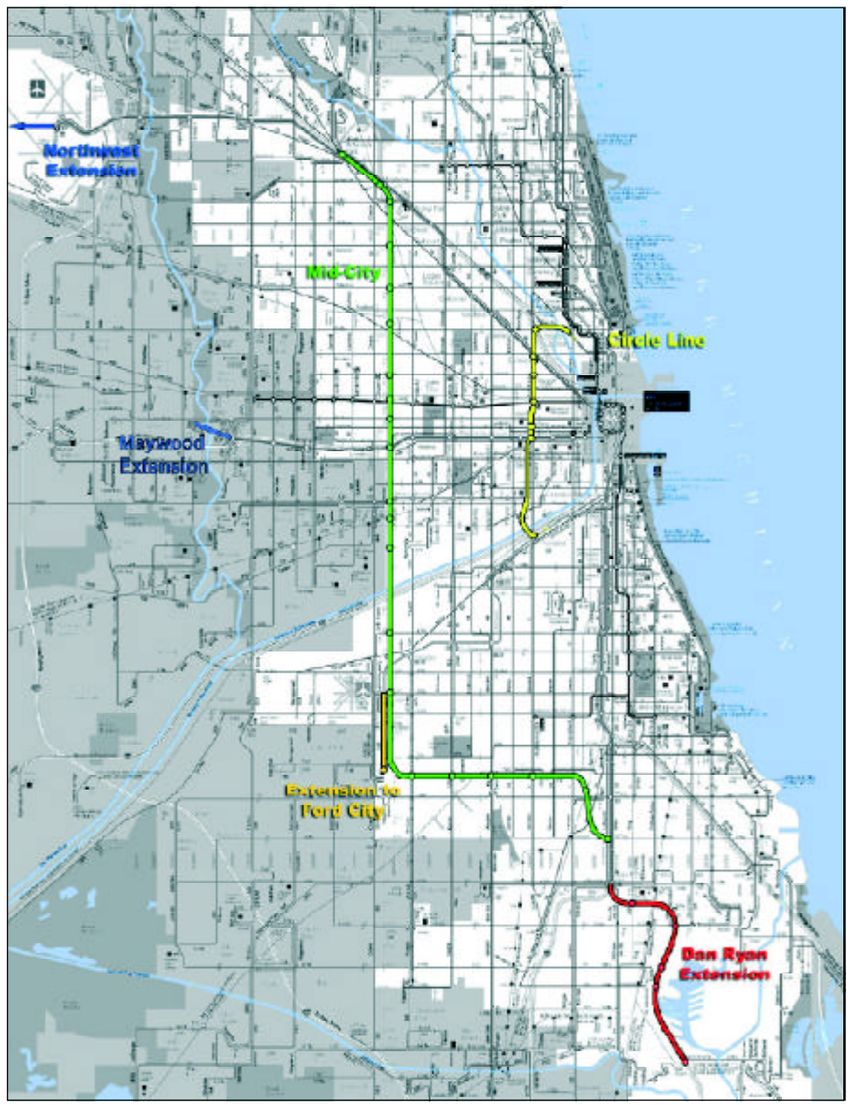

Figure 4.2.32
Potential CTA Rail Projects

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Metropolitan Area Expansion Projects

Increase CTA and Metra capacity to bring workers to the Central Area.

Key Recommendations:

- **Extend CTA rail lines to improve access to the Central Area from outlying neighborhoods**
- **Improve signaling to increase capacity**
- **Reroute Metra service to reduce conflicts with freight traffic**
- **Upgrade passenger facilities including stations and platforms**

Proposed CTA Rail Extensions and New Lines

CTA rail line extensions will make the Central Area more accessible from outlying areas.

- **ORANGE LINE EXTENSION**
  The extension of the Orange Line from Midway Airport to Ford City shopping center will make transit more attractive for trips to the Central Area from the far Southwest Side.
- **RED LINE EXTENSION TO CHICAGO'S FAR SOUTH SIDE**
  Several routes are being investigated, including a route along the Bishop Ford Expressway to 130th Street.
- **BLUE LINE EXTENSION**
  An extension of the Blue Line northwest from O'Hare to Schaumburg will reduce travel time between destinations outside the City and downtown. An extension of the Blue Line west from Forest Park to Maywood could incorporate a large intermodal transit center and increase transit capacity to the Central Area.
- **YELLOW LINE EXTENSION**
  Extending the Yellow Line from Dempster to Old Orchard Mall will make transit more attractive for trips to the Central Area from the Northern suburbs and for commuters on the Edens Expressway.
- **NEW CIRCLE LINE**
  The Circle Line is a new "super loop" around and through the Central Area of Chicago, connecting from Chinatown to North Avenue along Paulina Street. The 6.6-mile line would use a combination of existing rail segments and new subway and elevated links. The line would provide convenient shortcuts for CTA customers making cross-town trips while also improving access to the periphery of the Central Area. In addition, the Circle Line is designed to connect with many Metra commuter lines to the suburbs.
- **NEW MID-CITY TRANSITWAY**
  A 22-mile circumferential line will provide fast connections from outlying neighborhoods and provide easy connections to Metra and CTA radial lines to downtown.
- **NEW OGDEN AVENUE TRANSIT CORRIDOR**
  Establishing a modern streetcar line to connect the Central Area and Southwest Side via Ogden Avenue could enhance transit service between Navy Pier, Streeterville, River North, the West Loop, United Center, and the West Side Medical Center.

CTA Rail Signaling Upgrades

Improved signaling is proposed for the Red Line and the O'Hare branch of the Blue Line. The CTA's existing rail signaling system permits operation of trains at three-minute intervals. Upgraded signaling will permit two-minute headways to provide a 50% increase in train service. The increase in train service will require expanded yard capacity and the purchase of additional rolling stock.

Metra Commuter Rail Improvements

Many Metra commuter rail routes share trackage with freight traffic. Business Leaders for Transportation, a regional business coalition, anticipate "an 80% increase in Chicago area freight traffic over the next 20 years." Freight traffic is already a major constraint on some of the most heavily traveled routes, such as the BNSF line to Aurora. Substantially increasing the route capacity is difficult. Central Area rail terminals are also approaching the limits of their train-handling capacity. The following projects are proposed to provide alternative service and eliminate bottlenecks:

- **REROUTE SOUTHWEST SERVICE FROM UNION STATION TO LASALLE STREET STATION**
  LaSalle Street Station has excess capacity, while Union Station is approaching its limit. Rerouting Southwest Service will free up platforms on the south side of Union Station and provide faster service. Some trackwork at 74th Street is required to permit this change. Additional work is needed on the Southwest Service to bypass busy freight junctions.
- **PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PLATFORMS ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF UNION STATION**
  The Amtrak-Union Station Capacity Study currently underway will investigate all options and permit an appropriate expansion plan to be developed. Possibilties include:
  - West Loop Transportation Center tunnel under Clinton Street, as previously described
  - Platforms under the old main post office between Harrison and Van Buren
- **ELIMINATE RAIL/RAIL CROSSINGS AT KEY LOCATIONS.**
  Metra lines cross other commuter or freight routes at the same elevation at several points. The scheduling of trains to avoid conflicts limits the capacity of these lines. To eliminate such bottle-necks, "flyovers" are proposed at the following locations: Kensington on Metra Electric South Shore, Grand Crossing, Englewood, Brighton Park.
- **UPGRADE NORTH CENTRAL SERVICE**
  Improvements to tracks and interlockings will provide for expansion of the North Central Line between Union Station and Antioch.
- **EJ & E CIRCUMFERENTIAL ROUTE**
  This line will intersect and link with lines radiating from the Central Area, allowing more people to reach the Central Area by rail rather than car.

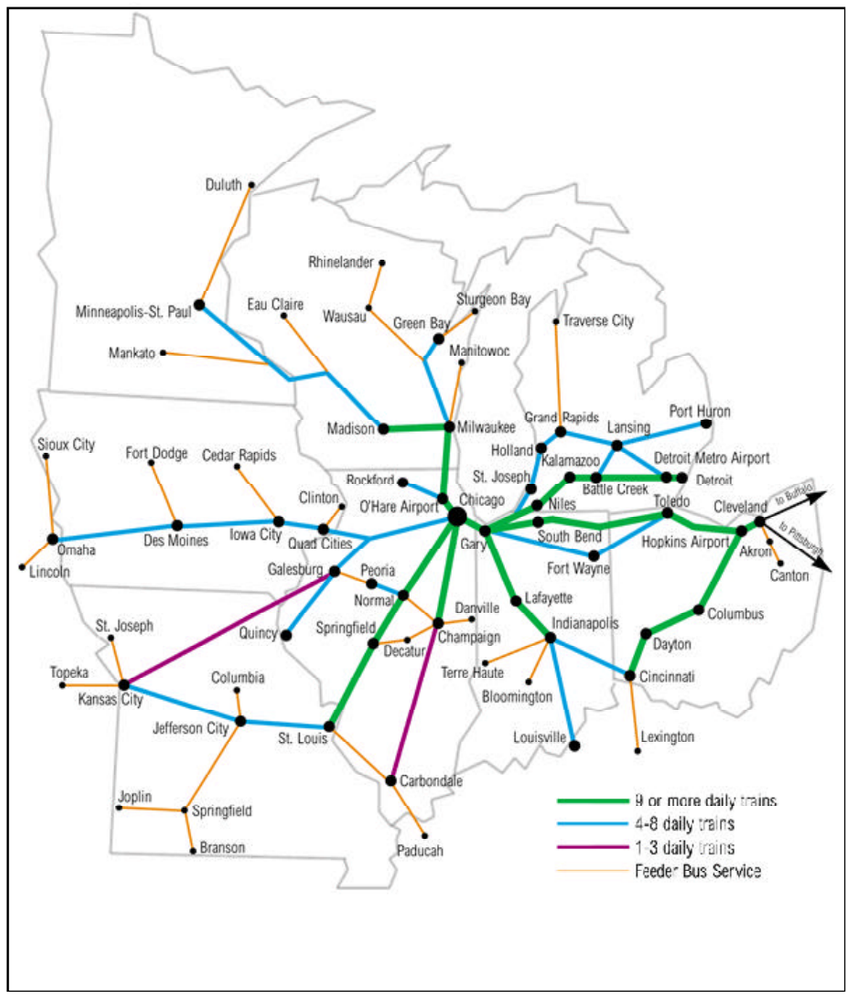

Figure 4.2.33
The Midwest Regional High-Speed Rail Initiative

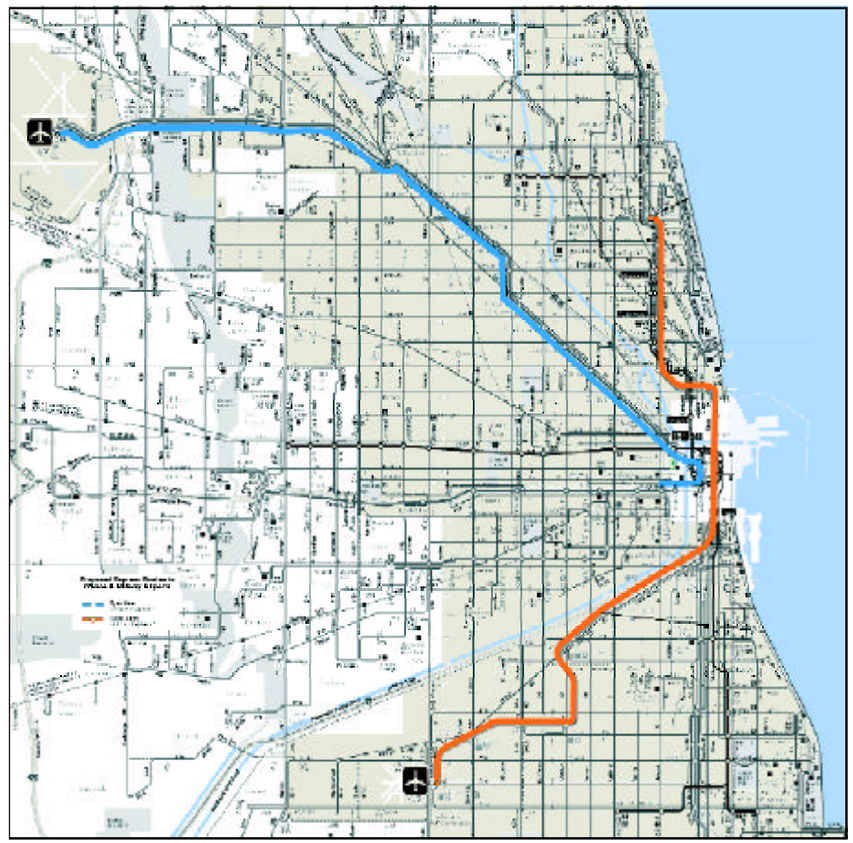

Figure 4.2.34
Potential Express Rail to O'Hare and Midway Airports

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Midwest and National Enhancement Projects

Inter-city enhancement projects will improve national and international connections.

Key Recommendations:

- **Facilitate development of the regional high speed rail system.**
- **Create express rail service to O'Hare and Midway airports from a central downtown terminal located between State and Dearborn in the Loop.**

High Speed Rail

THE PROPOSED REGIONAL HIGH SPEED RAIL SYSTEM WILL USE CHICAGO AS A HUB

The proposed Midwest regional rail system will connect Chicago with the ten largest metropolitan areas of the Midwest and numerous smaller cities en route. Trains will operate at speeds in excess of 110 MPH and would reduce travel times substantially. In downtown Chicago the high speed rail network will be a catalyst for the anticipated office and retail growth in the West Loop area.

Airport Express

EXPRESS RAIL SERVICE TO AIRPORTS FROM A DOWNTOWN AIRPORT TERMINAL OFFERING BAGGAGE CHECK-IN WILL GIVE THE CENTRAL AREA A POWERFUL COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AS A PLACE TO DO BUSINESS

Chicago is unique among U.S. cities in providing local rail service to both its major airports. On a typical weekday in 2000, nearly 9,000 riders boarded the Blue Line at O'Hare, making it one of the CTA's busiest stops. The existing service, in which trains make all stops, requires more than 45 minutes for the trip from O'Hare to the Loop.

As part of a comprehensive effort to improve access to all of Chicago's aviation facilities, an express rail operation is planned to connect a new downtown terminal with O'Hare and Midway Airports. Express trains would operate over the O'Hare branch of the CTA Blue Line for the 18-mile journey to the airport. Dedicated tracks will be used in key locations for faster service.

This presents an outstanding business opportunity for Chicago. The availability of fast, convenient and comfortable rail service will give the Loop a powerful global advantage as a place to hold business meetings and locate corporate headquarters and other facilities.

Midway Express trains would operate over a portion of the existing Red Line in the State Street Subway and the Orange Line to Midway Airport. The service would utilize an existing unused connection near 16th Street to transition between the Red Line and the Orange Line. Express trains will be able to operate with little congestion due to existing Orange Line station spacing.

Both O'Hare and Midway express service would use dedicated high-speed trains with special passenger amenities and high security cars to carry checked baggage. The trains would operate from a new terminal to be located between State and Dearborn in the Loop. Special platform doors would lead directly to the new downtown terminal, where passengers would be able to obtain a seat assignment and boarding pass from most carriers and check baggage through to their final destination. Airline flight and city information would be available at the station and aboard the train. The airports' checked luggage would be transferred directly to secured conveyors in existing tunnels leading to airline terminals.

The O'Hare Express would make the trip in less than 30 minutes, faster than any other form of ground travel. Trains would operate every 15 minutes from approximately 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Midway Airport Express service is expected to run every 20 minutes between 5:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. At the Midway rail station a new pedestrianway and secure baggage conveyer will allow for convenient passenger connections.

The O'Hare Express offers numerous advantages:

- Funding. As a premium-fare service built as part of the planned airport expansion, the O'Hare Express would have access to two revenue sources not available to most transit projects - Federal Aviation Administration airport funding and revenue bonds secured by fare income.
- Support for other transit improvements. The upgraded signaling needed to permit express trains to pass locals would also permit operation of local trains at two-minute intervals rather than the existing three, thereby increasing capacity on the Blue Line.

Figure 4.2.35
Trains used in the Midwest High-Speed Rail Initiative may be similar to the Acela Trains used in the Northeast Corridor System.

Figure 4.2.36
Express Rail Service from a central downtown Airport Terminal to Midway and O'Hare Airports will use dedicated train cars with special passenger amenities.

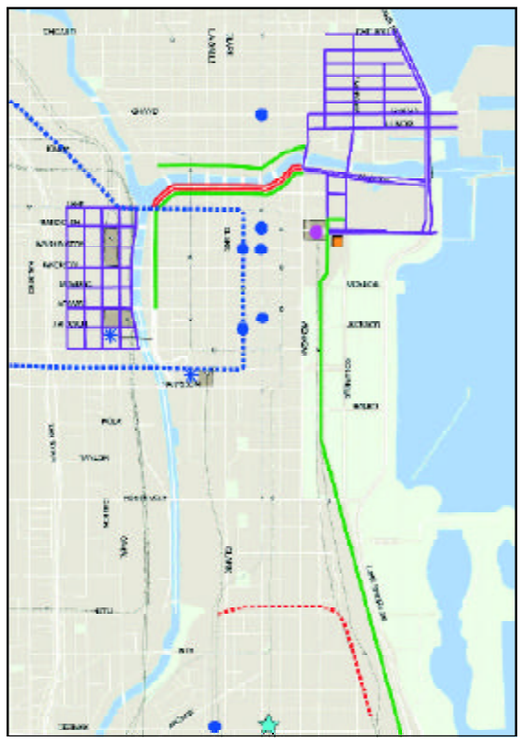

Figure 4.2.37
Phase 1 Transportation Improvements
Years 2002-2006

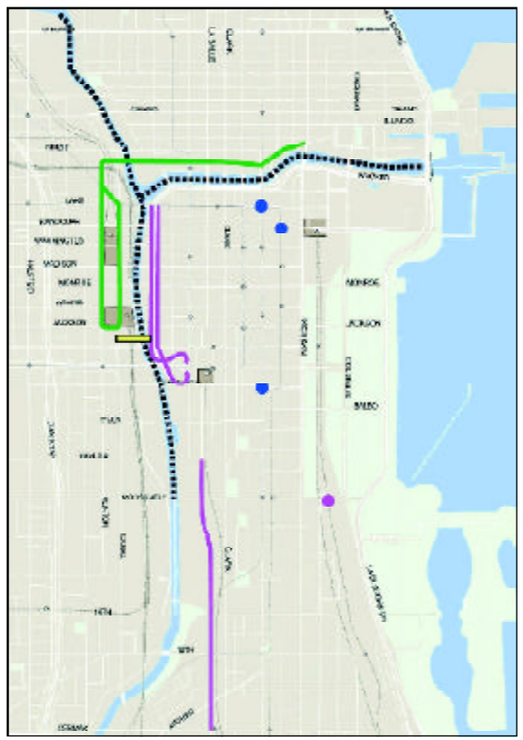

Figure 4.2.38
Phase 2 Transportation Improvements
Years 2007-2011

Figure 4.2.39
Phase 3 Transportation Improvements
Years 2012-2016

Figure 4.2.40
Phase 4 Transportation Improvements
Years 2017-2021

KEY FOR PHASING DIAGRAMS

- CTA Station - Existing
- Metra Station - Existing
- Metra Terminal - Existing
- New CTA Station
- CTA Station Renewal
- Intermodal Center
- Metra Station Renewal
- Bike Station
- Bus Rapid Transit
- O'Hare Express
- Pedestrian Bridge
- Riverwalk
- Roadway Improvement
- Signal System Roadway
- Reserved Right-of-Way
- Water Taxi Route

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Conclusion

Phasing of Transportation Improvements

Transportation improvements will be built in phases to provide increased levels of service as new development occurs. The following phasing schedule assigns illustrative dates to some of the proposed projects. Others will be added to the phasing schedule as funding permits and demand requires.

PHASE 1 (2002-2006)
- Resumed Lower Wacker express bus service
- Traffic Management Center
- Carroll Avenue transitway
- Pedestrian improvements
- Modernize Randolph and Roosevelt Road stations on Metra Electric
- Renovate CTA rapid transit stations (ongoing program through all four phases)
- Signal interconnects throughout Central Area
- Upgraded on-street transitways
- Protect rights-of-way
- Downtown Airport Terminal / Airport Express station
- Begin Circle Line

PHASE 2 (2007-2011)
- Wells-Wentworth connector
- Pedestrian bridge across South Branch at Union Station
- Expanded water taxi service
- Bicycle station in West Loop
- Complete the Circle Line

PHASE 3 (2012-2016)
- Monroe Street busway
- Bridge over South Branch at Taylor or Polk

PHASE 4 (2017-2021)
- West Loop Transportation Center

Next Steps

The following next steps should be taken to ensure the transportation plan moves forward:
- Continue feasibility studies
- Protect rights-of-way for future transportation corridors
- Estimate capital and operation costs
- Continue to develop implementation and funding plans
- Build consensus around transportation plan funding
- Complete Central Area parking study

Chapter 4 : THEME 3

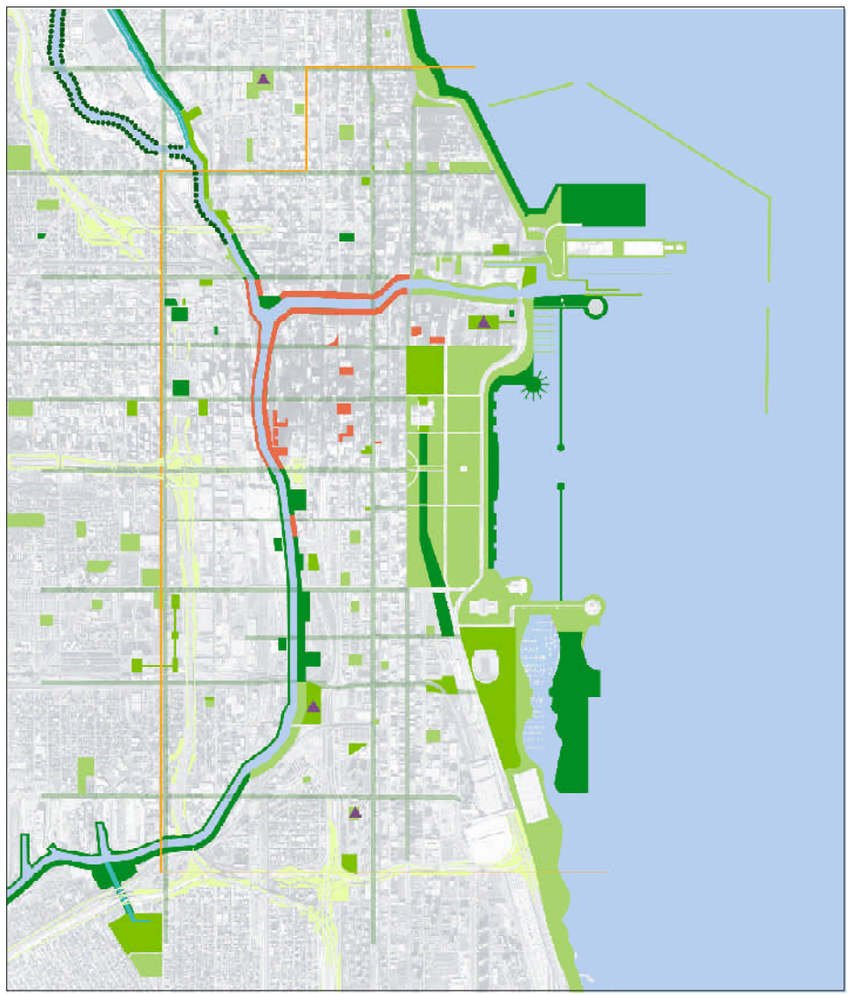
Waterfronts and Open Spaces

Expand and connect Waterfronts and Open Spaces to create great public places

Figure 4.3.1
Central Area Open Space

Open spaces and rich landscaping make the Central Area livable and help to attract business and visitors. Chicago's lakefront park system is known worldwide. In the 21st century it will also become known for its outstanding continuous riverfront open space.

CENTRAL AREA OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES



CENTRAL AREA OPEN SPACE SYSTEMS

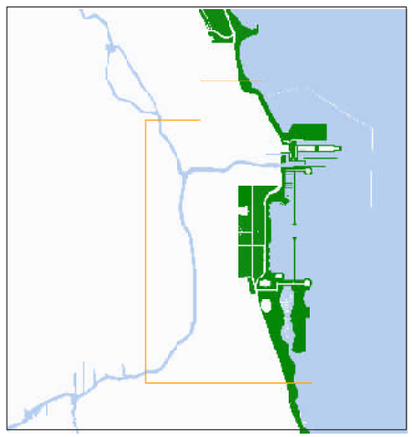


Figure 4.3.2 Strengthen the Lakefront as Chicago's great public space

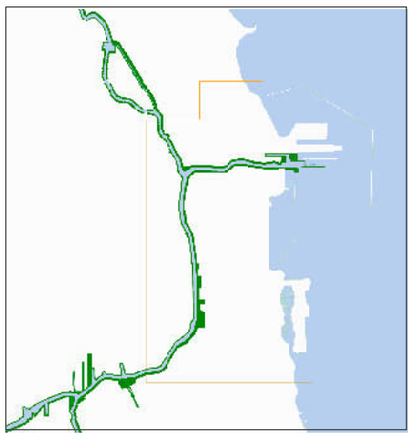


Figure 4.3.3 Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous park system

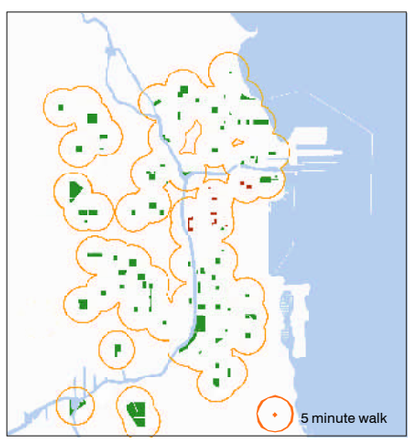


Figure 4.3.4 Create the next generation of parks and plazas

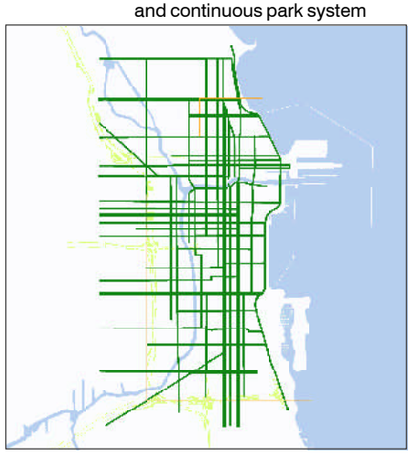


Figure 4.3.5 Complete the framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards.

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Theme 3: Waterfronts and Open Spaces

Expand and connect Waterfronts and Open Spaces to create great public places.

Guiding Principles

- **THE LAKEFRONT**
  Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space
- **THE RIVERFRONT**
  Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous open space system
- **PARKS AND PLAZAS**
  Create the next generation of urban and neighborhood parks to support the growing population
- **GREEN STREETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**
  Complete the Central Area's framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards

As the Central Area grows, new open space and parks will be required. Access to green space is a basic human need. It is particularly important in the Central Area, where most streets lack the grassy parkways and yards of outlying residential neighborhoods. Downtown parks provide beauty to the hundreds of thousands of people who pass through the Central Area every day. They soften the urban environment and make downtown Chicago a more desirable place to live, work, and visit.

The Central Area cannot accommodate the same amount or types of open space as other parts of Chicago. There are fewer families with children, but more visitors and workers. The downtown open space system and the design of individual parks will reflect these unique needs and provide access to a park or open space within a five-minute walk of everyone living or working in the Central Area. The Central Area will also reflect Chicago's high standards for the design and quality of public open space.

The City of Chicago's Cityspace Plan established a hierarchy of varying scales and functions:

- Magnet parks - lakefront parks attracting people from throughout the metropolitan area. Grant Park and Burnham Park serve this purpose in the Central Area.
- Regional parks - parks with fieldhouses serving several adjacent neighborhoods. The Central Area has two such parks within its borders, Ping Tom Park on the South Branch of the Chicago River, and the proposed Lakeshore East Park at Illinois Center, and another close by, Seward Park at Division and Orleans streets. Ping Tom Park is slated for expansion, as discussed below.
- Neighborhood parks - parks serving nearby residents. A number of such parks are to be constructed throughout the Central Area.
- Campus parks - green space on public school grounds serving nearby residents. Cermak Elementary and Teachers Academy will provide such a park at Cermak Avenue and State Street.
- Plazas/squares - outdoor spaces serving nearby office workers. Most such spaces are built by private developers under the City's "zoning bonus" program. The City has established more rigorous standards for such spaces.
- Greenways - landscaped pedestrian ways along the river or public streets that connect parks. The river walk is a major focus of this Plan.

Table 3.3.1: Central Area Open Space Opportunities – Acres (Parcels)

Location	Existing	Pending[1]	Buy/Build[2]	Air Rights	Total New
Riverfront	9 (7)	40 (21)	0 (1)	–	40 (22)
Lakefront	-	–	3 (1)	–	3 (1)
City Parks	13 (5)	4 (3)	10 (6)	27 (5)	41 (14)
Total	22 (12)	44 (24)	13 (8)	27 (5)	84 (37)

[1]Due to required 30' river setback or parcel already owned by city.
[2]River parcel proposed for purchase.

Source : Chicago Department of Planning and Development

Figure 4.3.6 Open space systems in the Central Area will form a connected network for residents and visitors.

Figure 4.3.7
The lakefront open space system

The Lakefront Open Space System
Planned, proposed and envisioned lakefront recommendations.
KEY LAKEFRONT RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Complete Millennium Park
2. Implement the Grant Park master plan to create new active and passive open spaces
3. Create Wacker Pier and a new public institution or museum Renovate the U.S. Coast Guard Station
4. Continue decking over the railroad in Grant Park to create new open spaces and minimize barriers
5. Expand Monroe Harbor
6. Create Northerly Island Park on the former Meigs Field
7. Create new parkland over the railroad at Central Station
8. Widen the lakefront path from North Avenue beach to Olive Park by 100 feet and create a wider public waterfront
9. Integrate park lands with the Jardine Water Filtration Plant
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
Existing Open Space
Planned Open Space
Open Space Vision
0
1/4
1/2
1 Mile

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The Lakefront

Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space

Key Lakefront Recommendations

- Complete Millennium Park
- Implement the Grant Park master plan, creating new active and passive open spaces
- Continue decking over the railroad in Grant Park to create new open spaces and minimize barriers
- Expand and complete Monroe Street Harbor including legacy projects inspired by the 1909 Plan of Chicago
    - Create Wacker Drive Pier with remodeled Coast Guard Station and a public feature or new museum
- Create new parkland over the railroad at Central Station
- Widen the lakefront path from North Avenue beach to Olive Park by 100 feet and create a new landscaped embankment
- Integrate expanded park lands with the Jardine Water Filtration Plant

Chicago's spectacular lakefront was created as a result of the implementation of major projects identified at the beginning of the 20th Century in Burnham's Plan of Chicago. Today, its attractions include Grant Park and Burnham Park with its festivals and gardens, Navy Pier, beaches, boating, and bike trails. Chicago's lakefront open space system will be strengthened, with new recreational and landscaped spaces and easier access and movement.

GRANT PARK AND MILLENIUM PARK

Much of the annual visitor traffic is focused in a small area around the Petrillo Music Shell at Jackson Boulevard and the Museum Campus and Soldier Field south of Roosevelt Road. The Grant Park Master Plan calls for redistributing attractions along the lakefront, improving circulation, and creating all-season venues. At the northern end of Grant Park, Millennium Park will attract new visitors year round with the addition of the Music and Dance Theater and the music pavilion. At areas of high traffic, decks will be built over the Metra Electric tracks to create new open spaces and permit easier pedestrian access to the lakefront.

SHORELINE NORTH OF NAVY PIER

To make more room for pedestrians and cyclists and provide much-needed landscaping, the shoreline can be extended 100 feet to the east between Olive Park and Oak Street Beach. In addition to the lakefront multi-use path, this new park land can incorporate seating and a landscaped embankment.

NORTHERLY ISLAND PARK

Meigs Field will become Northerly Island Park, a 50 acre park featuring native landscaping and adaptive reuse of airport buildings. The new park will be a destination for nature-based recreation and environmental education.

Figure 4.3.8 Implement the Grant Park Master Plan

Grant Park Master Plan

The major goals of the Grant Park Plan include:

- Expand the role of Grant Park as a regional, city-wide and local resource
- Activate the park as a whole, on a year-round basis, especially on non-event days and during the winter
- Protect and enhance the unique landscape of the park
- Preserve and interpret the park's historic character while accommodating its evolving uses, including the needs of new residential developments on its periphery
- Integrate Grant Park into the Lakefront open space system
- Develop short and long-range guidelines for land-use, management, maintenance, transportation, roadway design and park development
- Integrate the planning process for Grant Park with the plans for other facilities of the Central Lakefront
- Develop Butler Field as sports fields
- Introduce a performance venue at Hutchinson Field
- Extend pathways over the railroad rights of way

Figure 4.3.9 The Grant Park Master Plan

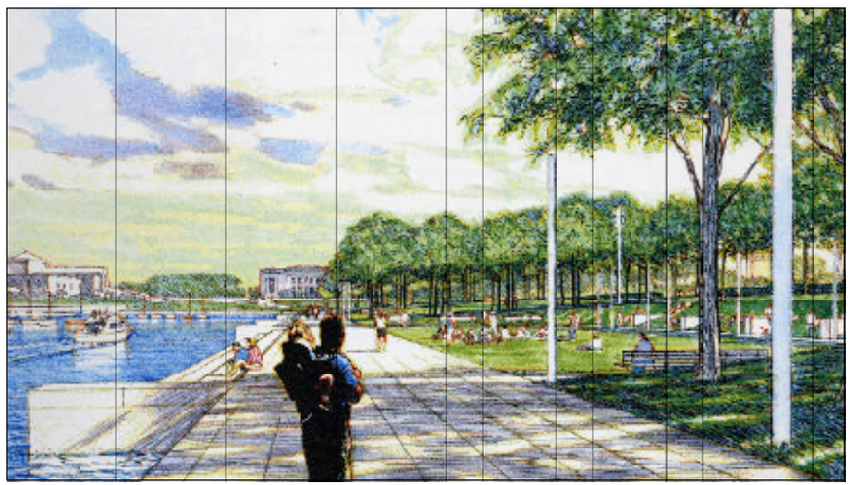


Figure 4.3.10 Queen's Landing

Figure 4.3.11 Neighborhood Park Area

Figure 4.3.12 The recently completed McCormick Tribune Ice Rink at Millenium Park

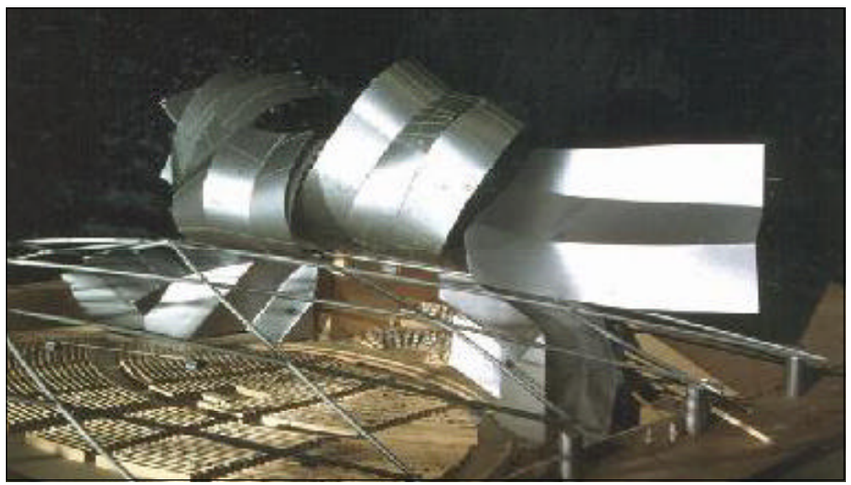


Figure 4.3.13 Outdoor music pavilion and bandshell at Millenium Park

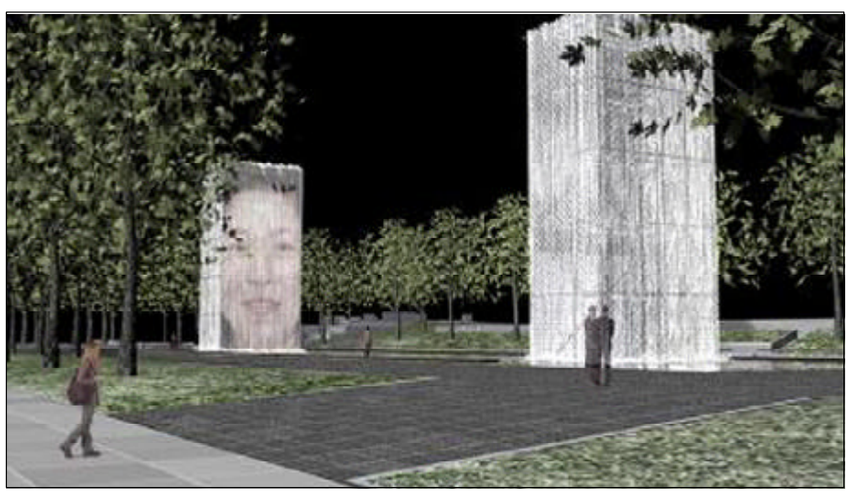


Figure 4.3.14 Public fountains at Millenium Park

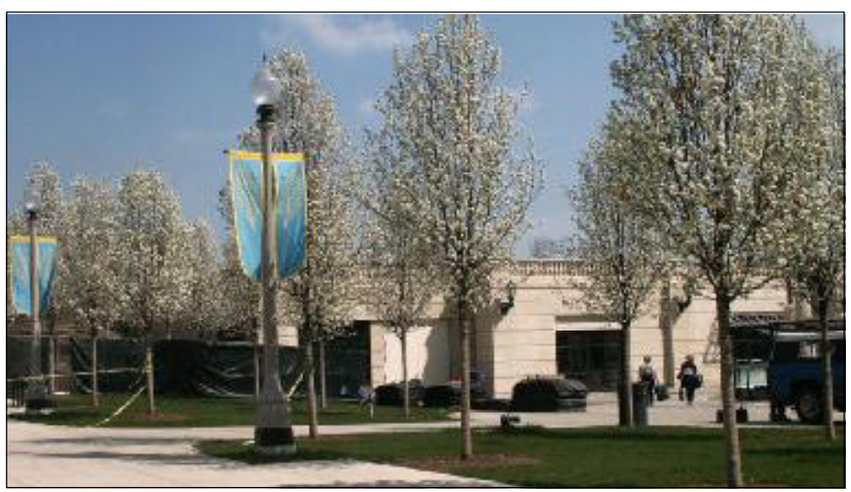


Figure 4.3.15 Michigan Avenue gardens at Millenium Park

Millennium Park

First conceived in 1997, Millennium Park will become one of the finest recreational and cultural spaces of any city in the world. The new park has added 16 acres to Grant Park by constructing a land bridge over the Metra Railroad tracks. The design, financed through public-private partnership, includes an outdoor ice rink, an award-winning band shell designed by architect Frank Gehry, a 1500-seat Music and Dance Theater, and extensive public sculptures, gardens, green spaces and promenades. Its underground parking structure will include over 2000 parking stalls for cars and a 400-space heated indoor bicycle parking facility complete with lockers, showers and bike repair.

Lakefront Expansion North of Olive Park

Expand the lakefront path between Olive Park and North Avenue beaches by 100 feet. Introduce landscaping to create new parkland and expanded pedestrian and bicycle ways between the city and the lakefront.

Figure 4.3.16 The lakefront path today

Figure 4.3.17 The lakefront path north of Olive Park in 2020

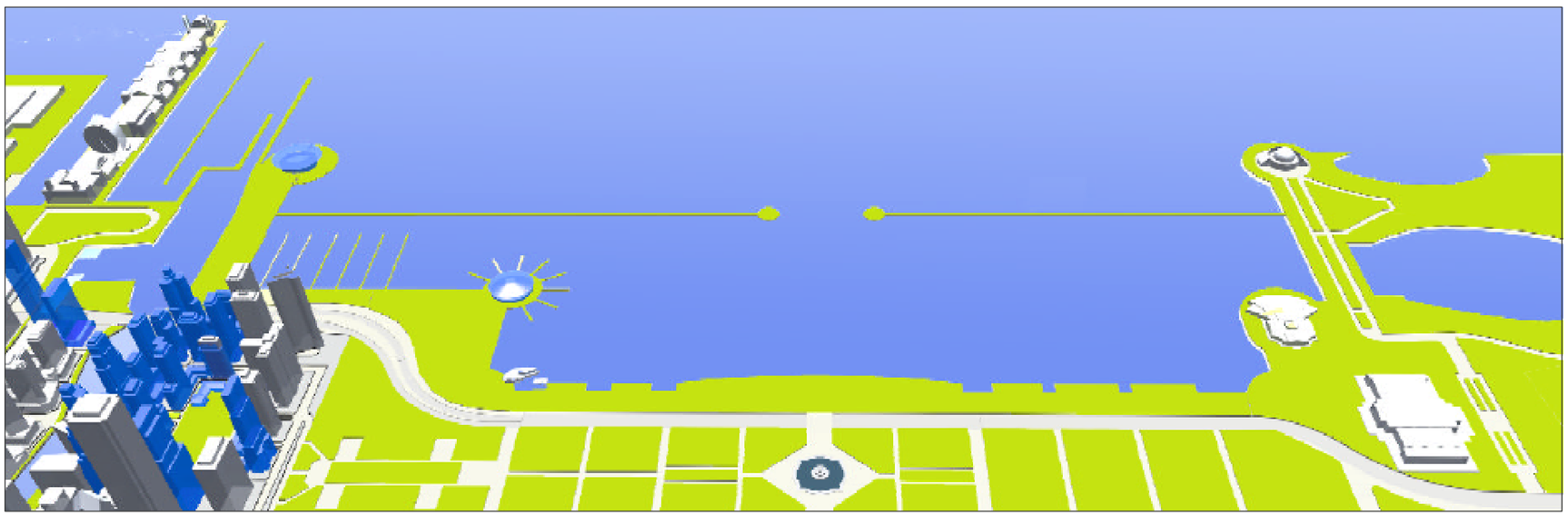


Figure 4.3.18 Concept of Wacker Pier and Monroe Harbor

Monroe Street Harbor

Expand and complete Monroe Street Harbor, create more boat slips and a new Yacht-Club-house. Explore widening and landscaping the breakwaters and the realignment of the southern breakwater.

Wacker Pier

Widen and landscape the existing DuSable Marina wall to create a new Wacker Pier and extended civic space, that brings people out to the lake. Renovate the existing Coast Guard Station and create a new public cultural institution.

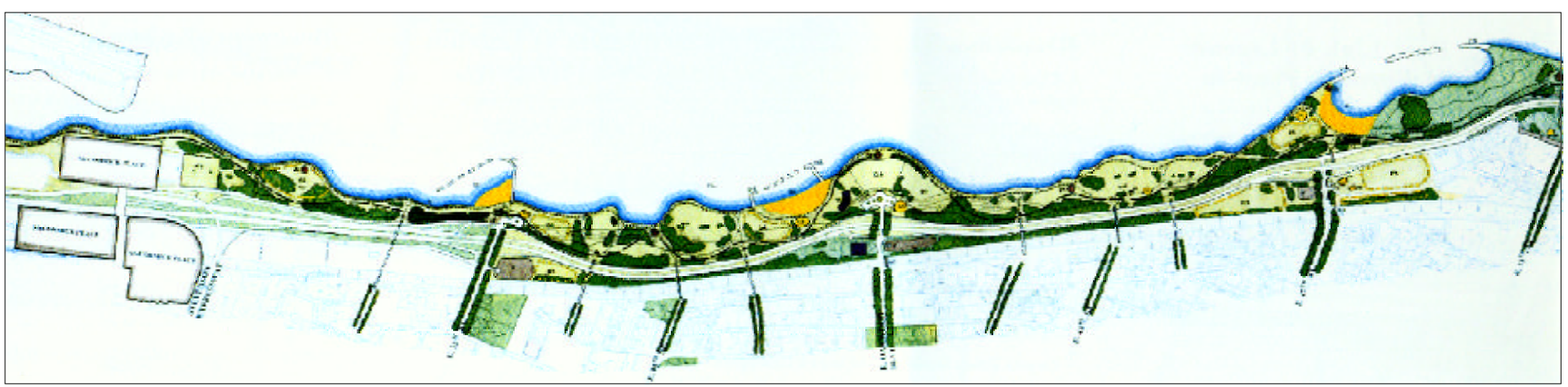


Figure 4.3.19 Burnham Park Framework Plan

Burnham Park Improvements

Implement the Burnham Park Framework with increased open space, improved landscaping, new beaches, active open spaces, fieldhouses, new roadway access and new pedestrian bridges across the railroad tracks and Lake Shore Drive. Locate Soldier Field Parking in structure and gain open space. Phase out the McCormick Place Lakefront Center and expand Burnham Park.

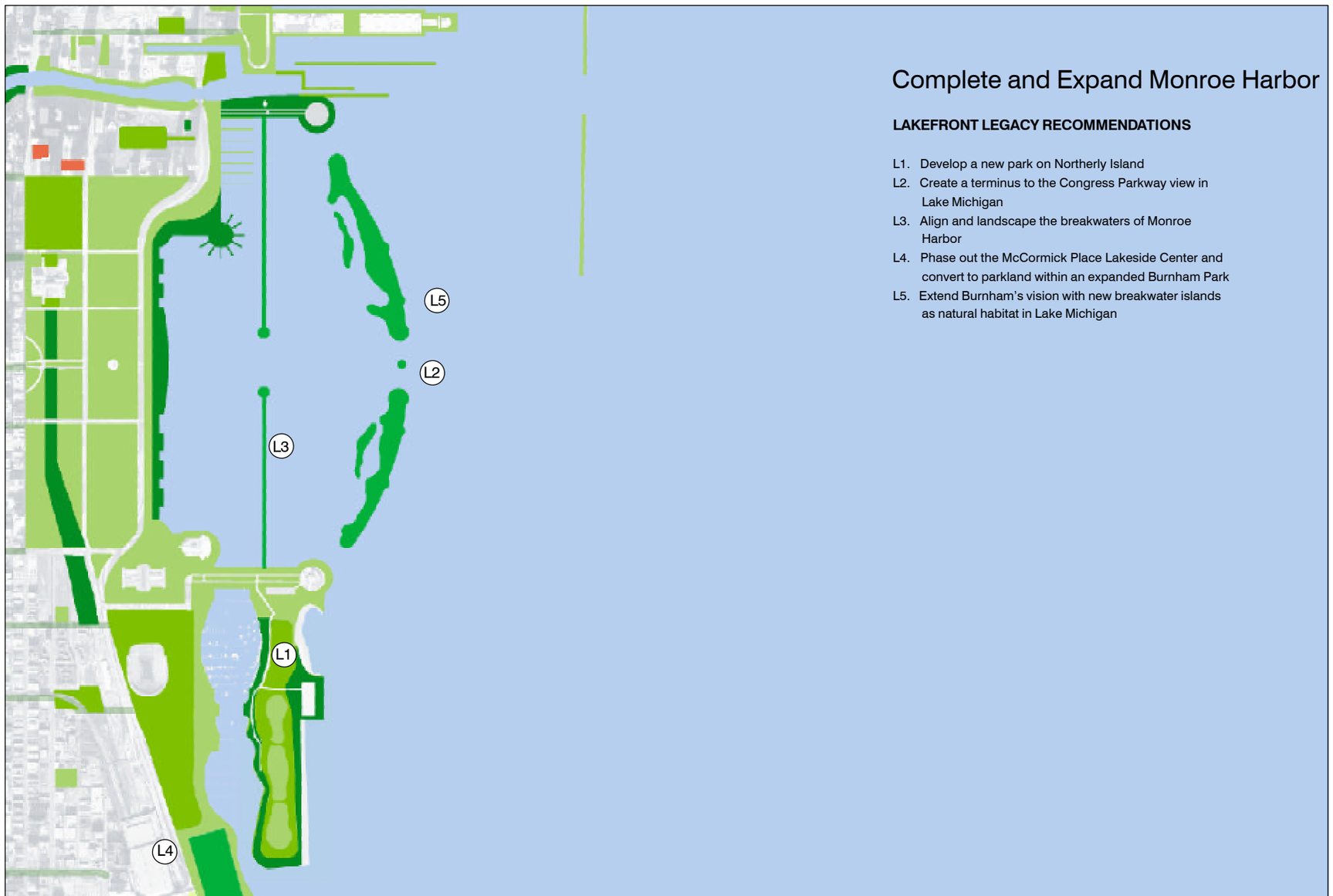

Complete and Expand Monroe Harbor
LAKEFRONT LEGACY RECOMMENDATIONS
L1. Develop a new park on Northerly Island
L2. Create a terminus to the Congress Parkway view in Lake Michigan
L3. Align and landscape the breakwaters of Monroe Harbor
L4. Phase out the McCormick Place Lakeside Center and convert to parkland within an expanded Burnham Park
L5. Extend Burnham's vision with new breakwater islands as natural habitat in Lake Michigan
L1
L2
L3
L4
L5
Open Space - Existing
Open Space - Planned
Open Space - Vision
Open Space - Legacy
Plazas

Figure 4.3.20
Chicago's Lakefront Legacy

Complete and Expand Monroe Harbor

Maintain the legacy of new ideas for Chicago's Lakefront first envisioned in Burnham and Bennett's 1909 Plan of Chicago

The grandest visions of Chicago's past leaders will be maintained through a commitment to exploring the feasibility of a new set of "legacy" projects for the lakefront.

The Plan proposes shoreline islands that create wave protection and also a new destination off-shore. The islands would offer extensive natural habitat environments for birds as well as parklands for visitors. The sweeping islands would form a larger Monroe Harbor, similar to the original Burnham concept.

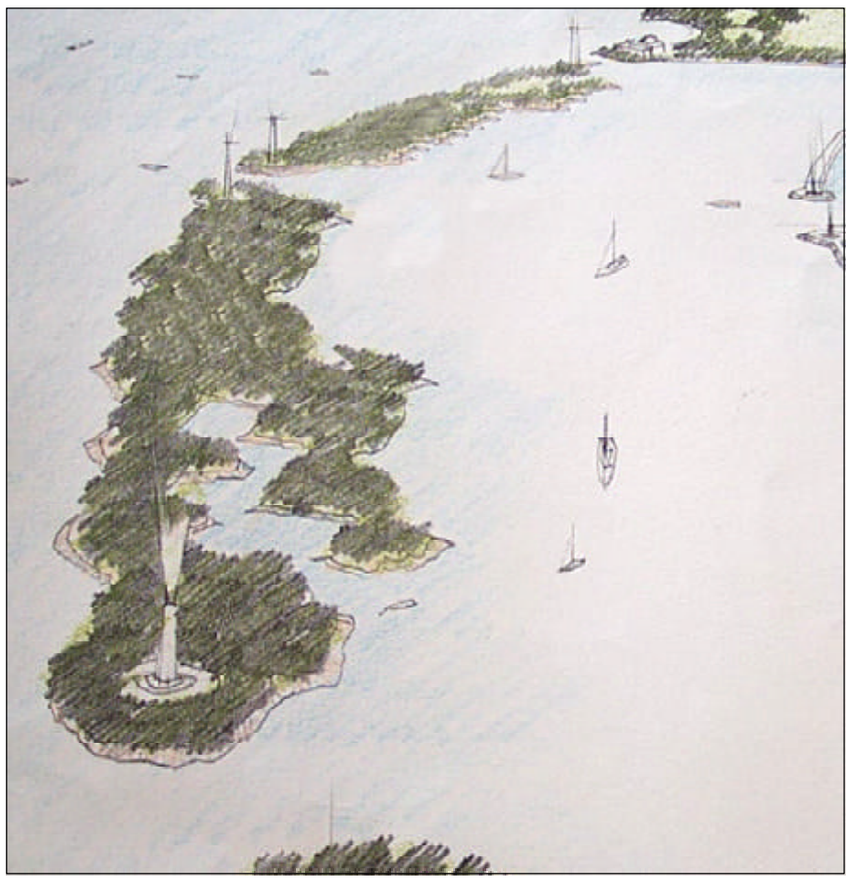


Figure 4.3.21
Shoreline islands form an outer breakwater as well as a natural habitat

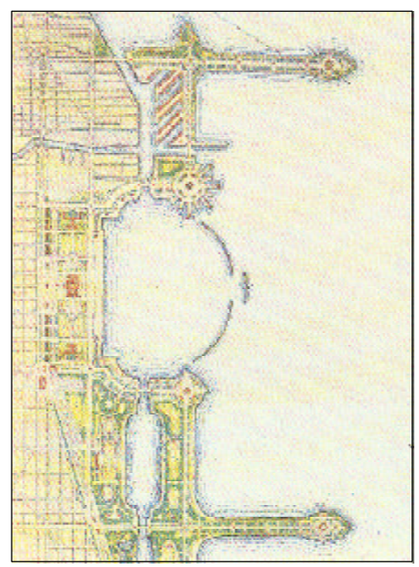
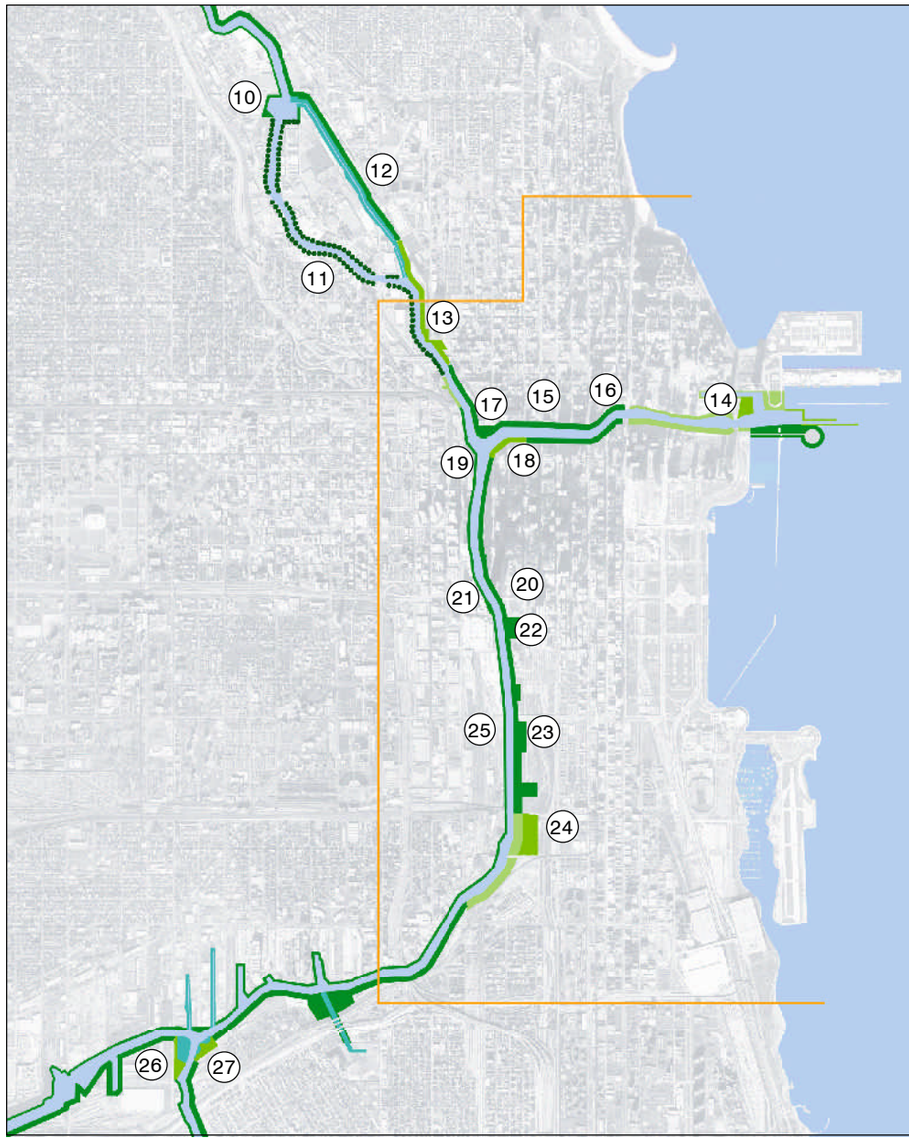


Figure 4.3.22
The central lakefront as envisioned by the Plan of Chicago (1909)

Figure 4.3.23
The riverfront will become a major new public amenity on a par with the lakefront. A continuous riverwalk will extend from outlying neighborhoods through the Central Area to Lake Michigan



The Riverfront Open Space System

Planned, proposed and envisioned riverfront recommendations.

KEY CHICAGO RIVER RECOMMENDATIONS

NEAR NORTH

10. Add a new boat house, pedestrian bridge and river edge landscape at the North Avenue turning basin
11. Enhance landscaping along the west side of Goose Island
12. Create a natural habitat and recreation opportunities along the east side of Goose Island
13. Ensure continuous river access through the Montgomery Ward site to connect with parks at Hobbie and Erie Streets.
14. Create Du Sable Park at the mouth of the Chicago River
15. Create an active riverwalk with commercial uses along the north side of the Main Branch from the lake to Wolf Point.
16. Create new public space at the Sun Times-Trump Tower Chicago site.
17. Create a new public park at Wolf Point.

THE EXPANDED LOOP

18. Create a continuous pedestrian riverwalk along Wacker Drive on the Main Branch from Lake Street to the lakefront as part of the Wacker Drive improvements.
19. Develop a riverfront plaza on the west bank of the South Branch between Randolph and Lake Streets.
20. Develop a public riverfront plaza at 310 South Wacker Drive.
21. Create new riverfront open space at the Old Main Post Office along with its redevelopment.

SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH

22. Create a new riverfront park at Franklin Point.
23. Create a continuous public river park on the east side of the Chicago River to provide public access from Harrison Street to Ping Tom Park.
24. Expand Ping Tom Park.
25. Achieve a continuous open space corridor along the west side of the Chicago River.
26. Implement Origins Park plan at the South Turning Basin.
27. Expand Origins Park to serve the Bridgeport neighborhood.

The Chicago Riverfront

Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous open space system

Key Riverfront Recommendations

- Create a connected greenway along the river, with continuous multi-use paths along at least one side of the river
- Increase public access to the river through the creation of overlooks and public parks
- Restore and protect native landscaping and natural habitats along the river, particularly fish and bird habitat, where appropriate
- Develop the river as a recreational amenity, attracting tourists and enhancing Chicago's image as a desirable place to live, work and visit
- Encourage economic development compatible with the river as an environmental and recreational amenity
- Good stormwater management in the Central Area will help to clean river and lake water

The riverfront will become a major new public amenity comparable to the lakefront. A continuous riverwalk will extend from outlying neighborhoods through the Central Area to Lake Michigan. Restoration of the banks will enhance habitat and water quality.

The Chicago River presents the single largest opportunity to enhance open space throughout the Central Area. The river is within a five-minute walk of most of the Loop and surrounding districts, and should provide a unique experience of nature in the city.

Completing the riverwalk will require coordination of public and private interests, overcoming physical constraints and significant capital investment. All river edge improvements will be designed with a view to integration into a connected, publicly accessible system.

City of Chicago ordinance currently requires a 30-foot setback from the water's edge for all new riverfront development. This should be seen as a minimum dimension with greater depth encouraged. New Riverfront projects should be reviewed as Planned Developments by the Department of Planning and Development. The City has published guidelines for river design and works closely with developers to ensure that riverside improvements meet certain standards for landscaping, lighting and accessibility.

Figure 4.3.24 The Main Branch of the Chicago River will be enhanced by a continuous riverwalk and underbridge connections

Figure 4.3.25 Water taxis on the Chicago River

Figure 4.3.26 Erie Terrace Park in River North

Figure 4.3.27 Natural habitat along the Chicago River

Figure 4.3.28 The Riverwalk Gateway under Lake Shore Drive

DRAFT

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE DOWNTOWN RIVERWALK WILL BE COMPLETED IN THE NEAR FUTURE

A continuous river path will be located on at least one side of the river throughout the Central Area. This path is envisioned as a multi-use trail suitable for cycling, walking, and other uses. The path will offer underbridge connections such as those at Lake Shore Drive and Columbus Drive on the Main Branch. These connections make a continuous landscaped path possible, extending from Michigan Avenue to Lake Michigan, with a link to the lakefront bike path at Lake Shore Drive.

On the north bank of the Main Branch, this path will extend west to a multi-level river promenade at the redeveloped Sun-Times site, which will also include access to a transit stop at the new Carroll Avenue busway. A continuous street level path at Marina City, IBM and Reid Murdoch will provide pedestrian access. The path will continue west and provide access to the Merchandise Mart and Wolf Point. Wolf Point affords striking views of the river corridor and provides an opportunity for a significant riverside improvement.

On the south bank, the walkway will continue west along Wacker Drive to Lake Street. The portion between Michigan Avenue and Lake Street is envisioned as a grand promenade featuring landscaping, seating, cafes, performance areas and concessions.

The river walkways are a key element in proposed downtown pedestrian improvements, designed to facilitate movement of commuters between the West Loop rail stations and their workplaces. Eventually, a continuous street-level riverside walkway will extend along the west side of the South Branch between Van Buren and Lake streets, with connections to Union Station and the Ogilvie Transportation Center. This walkway will make it possible for pedestrians to walk along the river from the train stations to the lakefront by crossing to the Wacker Drive walkway at Lake Street. The walkways will also provide stops for the enhanced water taxi system proposed for the Central Area.

THE NORTH AND SOUTH BRANCHES OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAJOR RIVER ENHANCEMENTS

Several large vacant sites remain along the north and south branches of the river. These sites offer opportunities for regional parks, natural areas and walkways. The redevelopment of the Montgomery Ward headquarters site will provide a continuous riverwalk from a park near Erie Street to a park near Hobbie Street. The eventual development of two vacant parcels will extend the riverwalk north to Halsted Street.

Another opportunity for enhanced trails and parks is provided on the east side of the South Branch between Roosevelt Road and Ping Tom Park at 18th Street as part of the South River Development Corridor.

At the eastern edge of Goose Island, the North Branch Canal can be designed to accommodate natural vegetation along its edges with an open channel for vessels. This would provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and a new recreational and environmental resource for residents.

Riverfront Projects

NEAR NORTH

- A new boat house, pedestrian bridge, and river edge landscape improvements at the North Avenue turning basin
- A new recreational and environmental resource along the east side of Goose Island on the North Branch Canal
- Continuous river access through the Montgomery Ward site from Hobbie to Erie streets, with parks at Hobbie and Erie
- Creation of Du Sable Park at the mouth of the Chicago River
- An active riverwalk with commercial uses along the north side of the Main Branch from the lake to the Sun-Times / Trump Tower Chicago site and points west
- A new public space at the Sun-Times-Trump Tower Chicago site
- Potentially a new public park at Wolf Point

THE EXPANDED LOOP

- A continuous pedestrian riverwalk along Wacker Drive on the Main Branch from Lake Street to the lakefront
- A public riverfront plaza on the west bank from Randolph to Lake
- Public riverside open space at the old main post office

SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH

- A new riverside park at Franklin Point
- A continuous public river park on the east side of the Chicago River offering continuous public access from Harrison Street to Ping Tom Park
- Expansion of Ping Tom Park
- Possible continuous open space corridor along the west side of the Chicago River
- Creation of a neighborhood riverfront park in Pilsen
- Extension of the river park system to the southwest into the heart of the City

River Parks and the Riverwalk

The River should be seen as a valuable open space resource as well as a viable transportation corridor for pedestrians, cyclists and water taxis.

Figure 4.3.29 The South Branch today

Figure 4.3.30 The South Branch in 2020

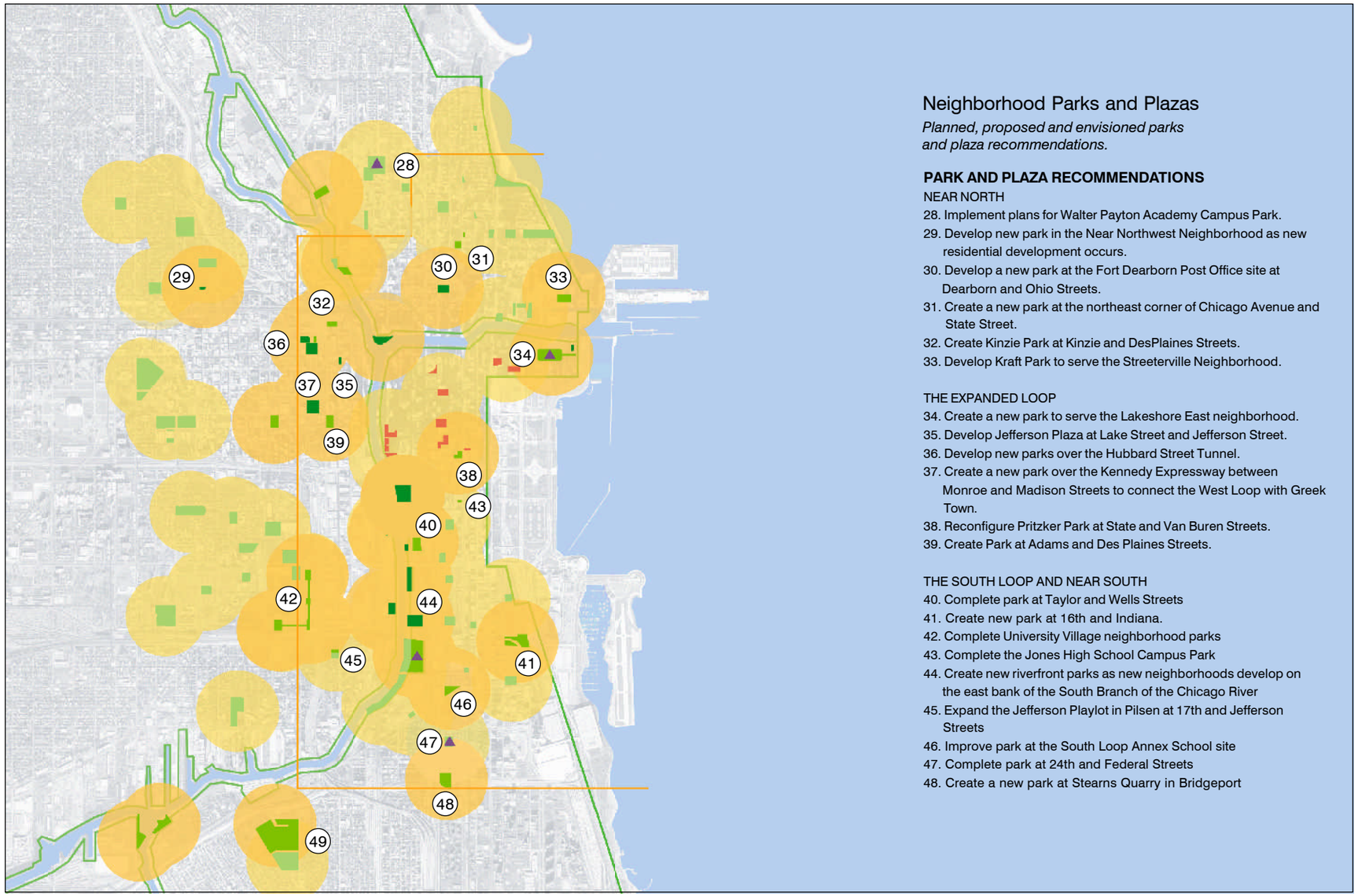
Figure 4.3.31 The North Branch Canal in 2020

North Branch Canal River Edge Improvements

The North Branch Canal on the east side of Goose Island will be transformed, serving as natural habitat and providing a variety of ecological and recreation opportunities.

Figure 4.3.32 The North Branch Canal today

Figure 4.3.33
The Central Area will provide a range of new parks and plazas, serving a variety of needs.



Neighborhood Parks and Plazas

Planned, proposed and envisioned parks and plaza recommendations.

PARK AND PLAZA RECOMMENDATIONS

NEAR NORTH

28. Implement plans for Walter Payton Academy Campus Park.
29. Develop new park in the Near Northwest Neighborhood as new residential development occurs.
30. Develop a new park at the Fort Dearborn Post Office site at Dearborn and Ohio Streets.
31. Create a new park at the northeast corner of Chicago Avenue and State Street.
32. Create Kinzie Park at Kinzie and DesPlaines Streets.
33. Develop Kraft Park to serve the Streeterville Neighborhood.

THE EXPANDED LOOP

34. Create a new park to serve the Lakeshore East neighborhood.
35. Develop Jefferson Plaza at Lake Street and Jefferson Street.
36. Develop new parks over the Hubbard Street Tunnel.
37. Create a new park over the Kennedy Expressway between Monroe and Madison Streets to connect the West Loop with Greek Town.
38. Reconfigure Pritzker Park at State and Van Buren Streets.
39. Create Park at Adams and Des Plaines Streets.

THE SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH

40. Complete park at Taylor and Wells Streets
41. Create new park at 16th and Indiana.
42. Complete University Village neighborhood parks
43. Complete the Jones High School Campus Park
44. Create new riverfront parks as new neighborhoods develop on the east bank of the South Branch of the Chicago River
45. Expand the Jefferson Playlot in Pilsen at 17th and Jefferson Streets
46. Improve park at the South Loop Annex School site
47. Complete park at 24th and Federal Streets
48. Create a new park at Stearns Quarry in Bridgeport

Parks and Plazas

Create the next generation of urban and neighborhood parks and plazas to support the growing population

Key Park and Plaza Recommendations

- Expand regional parks to better serve Central Area residents
- Create new neighborhood parks
- Ensure that plazas contribute to the pedestrian realm with landscaping and seating, and are located appropriately

Regional Parks

Regional parks include Ping Tom Park as well as Seward Park just outside the Central Area. Ping Tom Park at 18th Street and the Chicago River is being expanded to include a fieldhouse, baseball diamonds, a soccer field, and river edge connections to the north and south.

In addition, a 5.3 acre park and an adjacent elementary school are planned as part of the Lakeshore East development. The park will include indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, with fieldhouse services provided in the school building.

Neighborhood Parks

These parks are intended primarily for nearby residents and workers. New neighborhood parks are being pursued at the following locations:

- Kinzie Street and Jefferson Street.
- Kraft Building site at Grand Avenue and Peshtigo Court. A two-acre park will be built above an underground parking lot, helping to ease both open space and parking shortages in the area.
- U.S. Postal Service site, Ontario Street and Dearborn Street. A 0.8-acre park serving the River North community has been proposed for this location. River North currently has no interior parks despite substantial population growth.
- A park over the Kennedy Expressway at Monroe Street that will connect the West Loop to Greektown and be a civic gateway.
- A West Loop Park at Desplaines Avenue and Adams Street. A 1.2-acre park has been proposed for this site, currently used as a parking lot. A grade school and numerous apartment buildings are in the vicinity. The West Loop has been proposed for high-density office development and will require adequate open space for workers on their lunch breaks.
- The southeast corner of Taylor Street and Wells Street. This 3-acre site is being reserved in anticipation of residential development in the vicinity.
- 24th Street and Federal Street.

Plazas

Plazas serve the Central Area's workers. Although open to the public, in many cases they are actually privately owned and maintained. Many plazas in the Central Area were built under the bonus provisions of the Chicago zoning code, which permit developers to build larger buildings in return for providing public amenities. To ensure future plazas and other amenities are of high quality, the zoning code was recently amended to include design standards for character, size, landscaping, access, location, orientation, seating and lighting. Plazas are prohibited in areas where they would disrupt the continuity of the historic street wall such as sections of Michigan Avenue, LaSalle Street and Wabash Avenue.

Fort Dearborn Park

Develop a new park at the Fort Dearborn Post Office site at Dearborn and Ohio Streets after the phasing out and the relocation of the post office operations. This park will serve the growing residential population of River North, which has minimal public open space.

Figure 4.3.34 Fort Dearborn Post Office today

Figure 4.3.35 Fort Dearborn Park in 2020

Figure 4.3.36 I-94 and Monroe Street in 2020

A new park over the Kennedy Expressway at Monroe Street

The new park will connect the West Loop with Greek Town and create needed open space without challenging development sites. This one block park should be seen as part of a "green gateway" to the Central Area. The automobile passage underneath should also be designed as an attractive civic gateway. It can set a precedent for a new generation of parks and urban greening that improve air quality and soften the edges of the expressways.

Figure 4.3.37 I-94 and Monroe Street today

Ping Tom Park

An expanded Ping Tom park will include a new fieldhouse, athletic fields and green space adjacent to the Chicago River.

Figure 4.3.38 The South River corridor today.

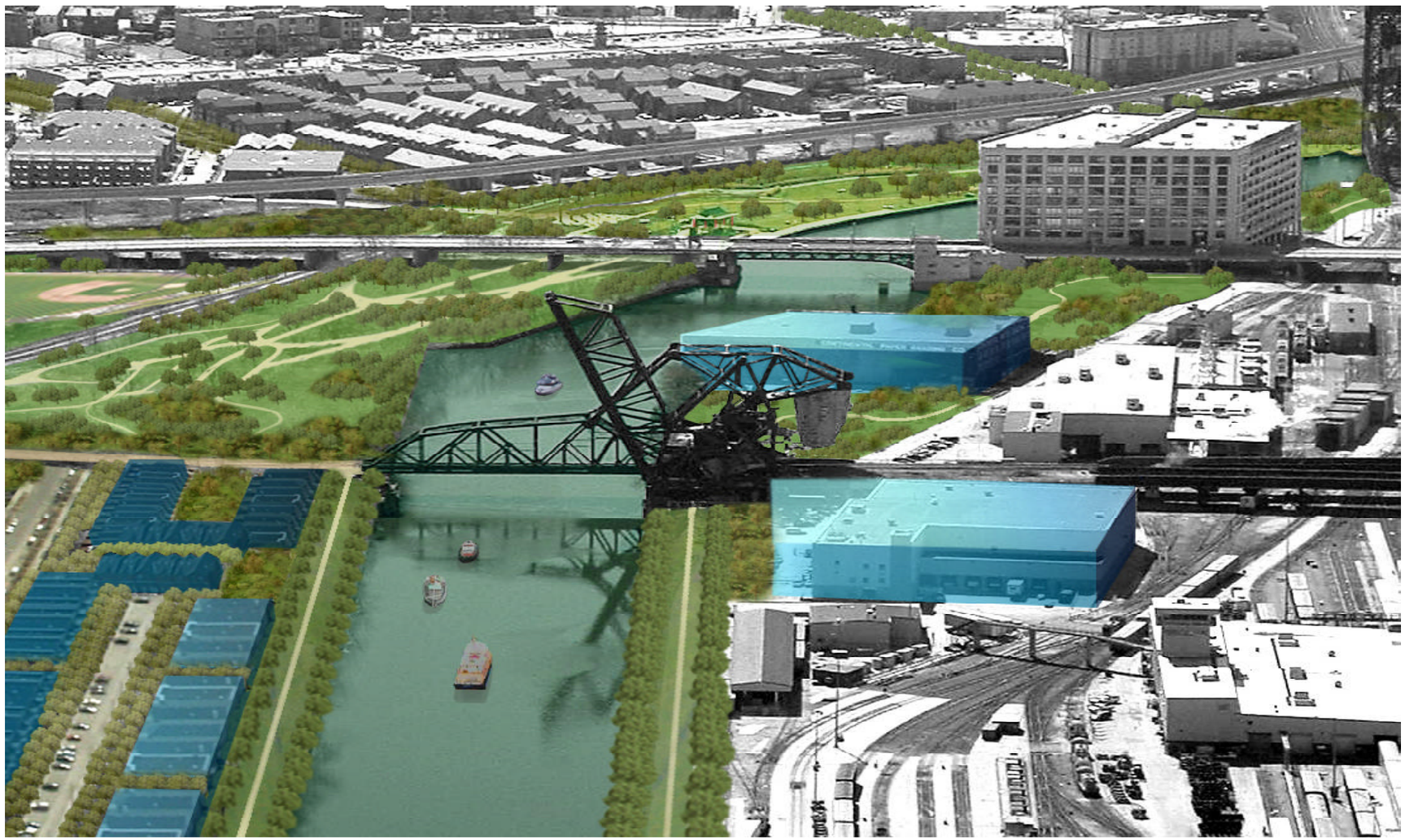


Figure 4.3.39 The South River corridor in 2020 will connect the New South River Neighborhoods to the Loop via a continuous riverwalk.

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Park and Plaza Projects

NEAR NORTH

- Walter Payton Academy campus park
- New parks in the Near Northwest neighborhood as new residential development occurs
- Kinzie Park at Kinzie and Desplaines streets
- Jefferson Plaza at Jefferson and Lake Street
- A new park at the Fort Dearborn post office site at Dearborn and Ohio Streets
- A new park at the northeast corner of Chicago Avenue and State Street
- Kraft Park to serve the Streeterville Neighborhood

THE EXPANDED LOOP

- A new park to serve the Lakeshore East Neighborhood
- A new Plaza at 310 South Wacker Drive
- Reconfigure Pritzker Park at State and Van Buren streets
- Create new parks over the Kennedy expressway at Monroe Street and over Hubbard's Cave
- Connect the Near West Side and the University of Chicago at Chicago (UIC) with new parkland over the Eisenhower Expressway

THE SOUTH LOOP

- Complete a new park at Taylor Street and Wells Street
- Complete the Jones High School campus park

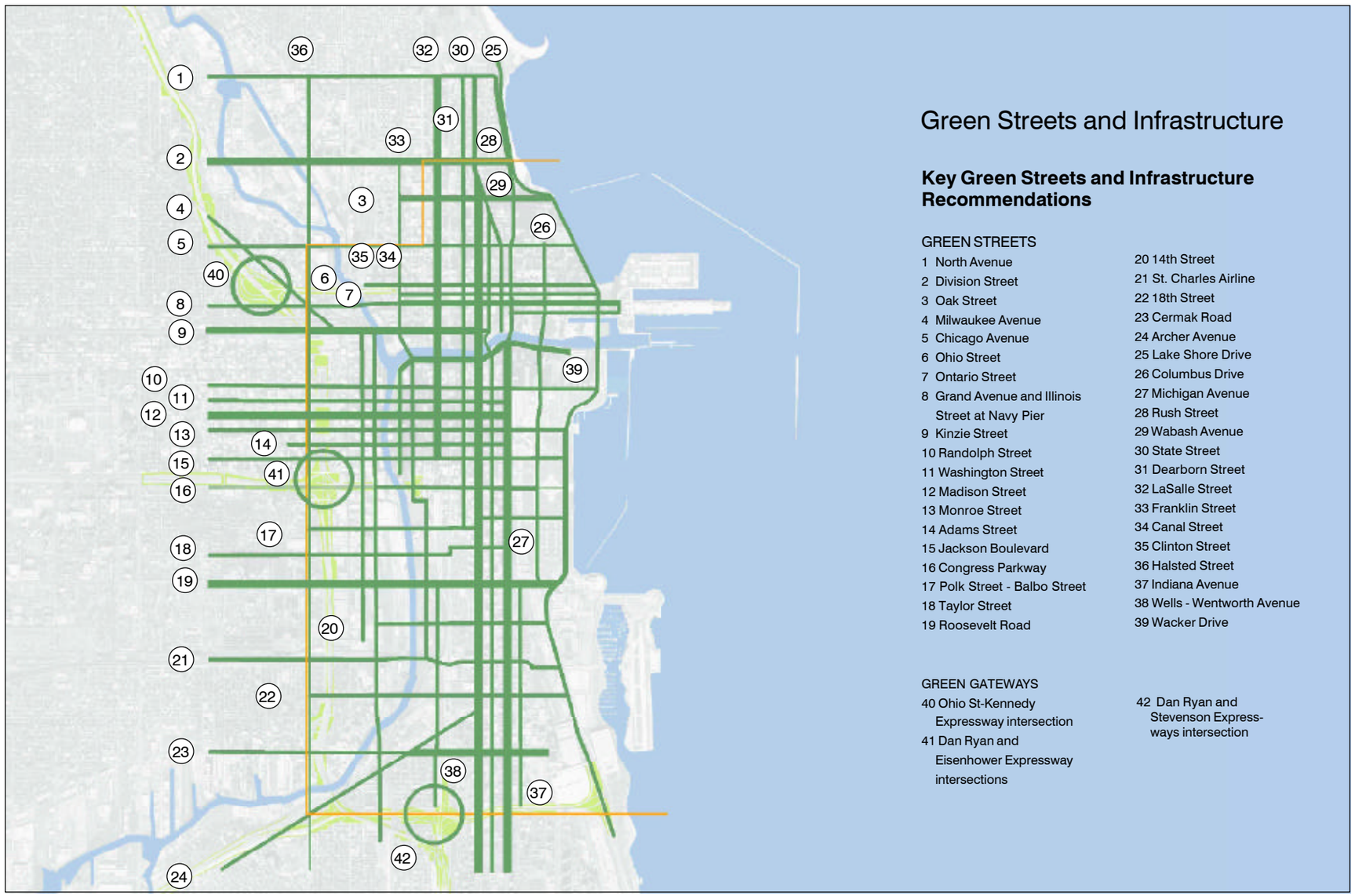
THE NEAR SOUTH

- Create neighborhood parks on the west side of the Chicago River
- Complete the planned park at 24th and Federal Streets
- Expand the Jefferson playlot in Pilsen
- Expand Ping Tom park to include athletic fields and a fieldhouse
- Complete Mark Twain Park at 15th Place and Indiana Avenue
- Develop a new park at the South Loop Annex school site

PARK PROJECTS NEAR THE CENTRAL AREA

- Look to the underutilized waterfront in Pilsen and Bridgeport for future park opportunities
- Create a new park at Stearn's Quarry in Bridgeport
- Complete neighborhood parks with completion of UIC's south campus expansion

Figure 4.3.40
Green streets and infrastructure



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Green Streets and Infrastructure

Complete the Central Area's framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards.

Key Recommendations

- Landscape improvements along expressway corridors and intersections throughout the Central Area
- Create a "green" intersection at the Ohio Street feeder from the Kennedy Expressway, and at other gateway locations such as Chicago Avenue and Larrabee Street, Roosevelt Road and Clark Street, and Cermak Road and the Chicago River
- Expanded sidewalks and landscaping on existing bridges over the Kennedy Expressway connecting the West Loop with Greektown
- Create a strong gateway at the intersection of the Eisenhower and Dan Ryan expressways
- Create parks along the CTA's Green Line in the Near South
- Create the St. Charles Airline Greenway to connect neighborhoods and the Chicago River to the Lakefront adjacent to 16th Street

Trees and plants soften the city's sharp edges and are an important supplement to dedicated open space. They can also play a key role in reducing the urban heat island effect. In recent years, the city has installed new trees, landscaped medians and planters as part of a comprehensive loop streetscaping project. On some of these streets, such as State Street and Michigan Avenue, local business orginizations have taken over their maintenance. These improvements are created through streetscape associations funded by local businesses and building owners. The City will continue to work with the business community to expand its streetscaping program along key arteries throughout the Central Area.

The St. Charles Airline, an east-west elevated rail right-of-way adjacent to 16th Street, presents an opportunity for greening of the Central Area. It offers a potential pedestrian and bicycle connection between the lakefront and the neighborhoods to the west. Even if the current structure were to be leveled, the St. Charles could be reconfigured as a recreational greenway with bike trails and pedestrian paths to connect the lakefront to Douglas Park and the boulevard system. It may also be retained as part of the transit system.

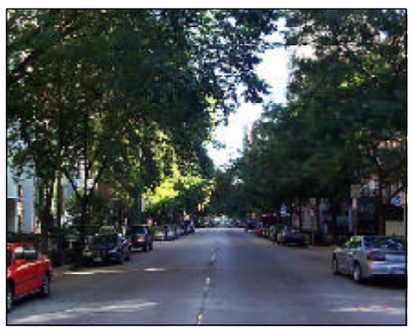

Figure 4.3.41 North Dearborn Parkway
An example of a well landscaped street

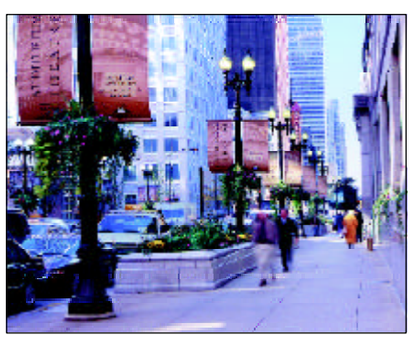

Figure 4.3.43 Randolph Street
Streetscaping in the Theatre District

Figure 4.3.42 State Street
One of the Loop's great retail streets, State Street is softened by plants and shaded by trees.

Figure 4.3.44 Rush Street
Landscaping on Rush Street

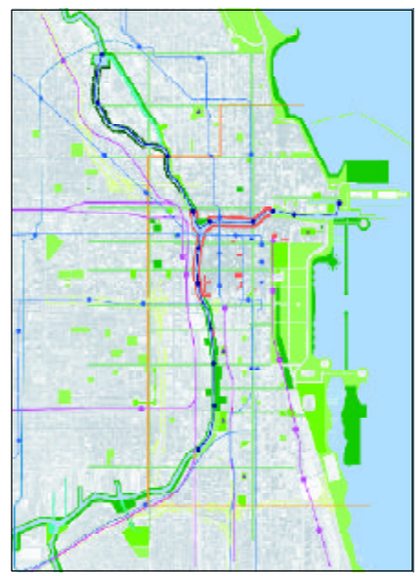

Figure 4.3.45 Green streets and transit provide a 'green' infrastructure that connects the Central Area without a car.

Figure 4.3.46 Dearborn Street
Lights and landscaping in the Loop

Figure 4.3.47
Hanging planters add greenery and keep sidewalks open

Figure 4.3.48 Randolph Street
Consolidated newspaper rack

Figure 4.3.49 Street signage explains local points of interest

STREET FURNITURE

In locations where street and sidewalk widths do not allow for planters or landscaped medians, street furnishings can be used to "green" the streets. Streetlights with banners or planters add color and festivity to the pedestrian experience. Keeping street furniture, such as newspaper stands, orderly and compact helps to increase the amount of space for pedestrian movement, especially on narrow sidewalks. Signage, special paving and other details further enhance the pedestrian experience. Maintaining consistent standards for the design and placement of these furniture elements in the various districts of the Central Area will also help to define their identity.

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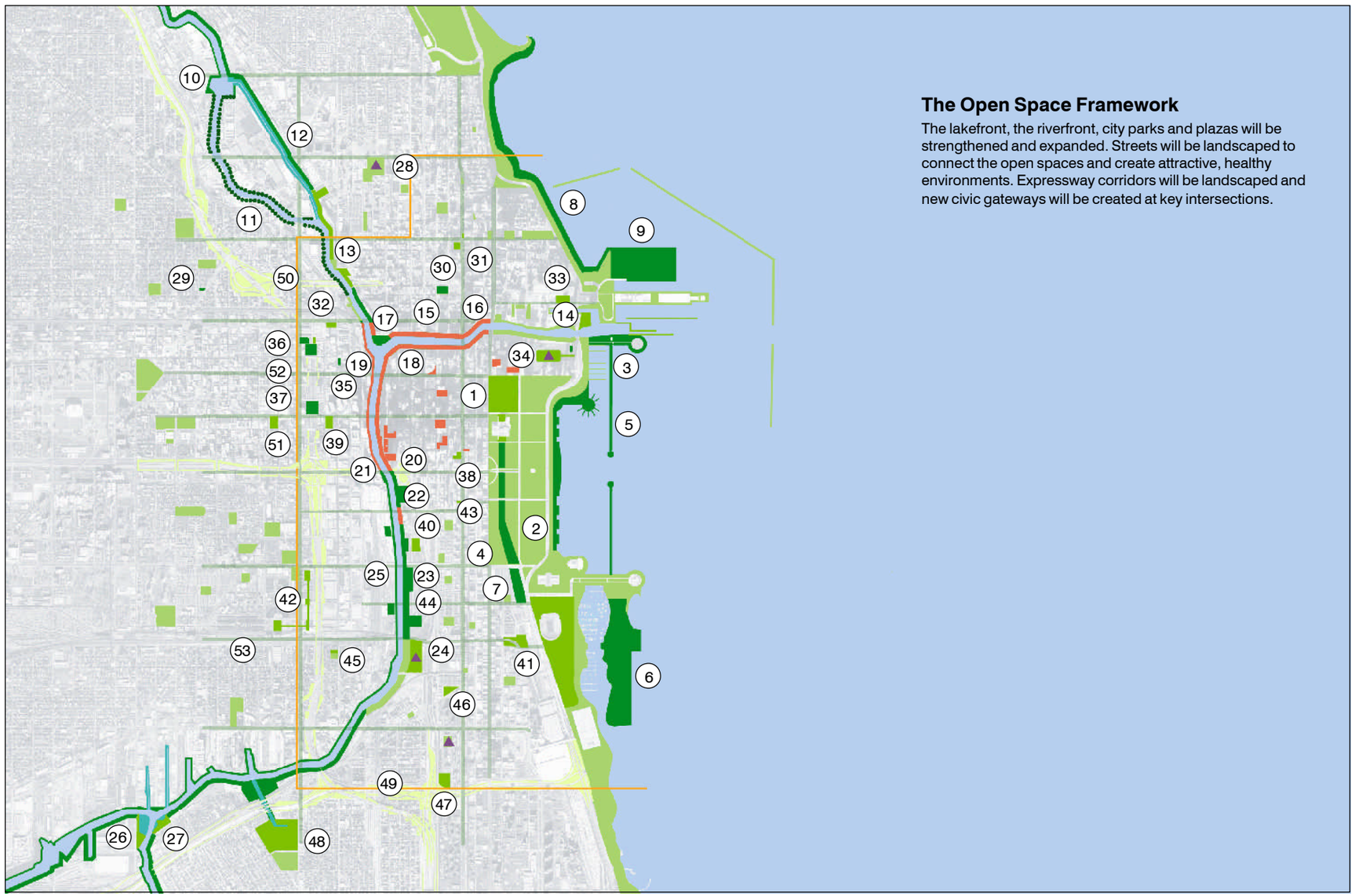
Figure 4.3.50 Michigan Avenue, looking south from Roosevelt Road, in 2020. South Michigan Avenue will be a landscaped street connecting the Near South district to the Loop. It will be a major pedestrian, bicycle and transit corridor.

Figure 4.3.51 Michigan Avenue today.

Figure 4.3.52
The Open Space Framework



The Open Space Framework

The lakefront, the riverfront, city parks and plazas will be strengthened and expanded. Streets will be landscaped to connect the open spaces and create attractive, healthy environments. Expressway corridors will be landscaped and new civic gateways will be created at key intersections.

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Summary of Open Space Recommendations

Key Lakefront Recommendations

1. Complete Millennium Park.
2. Implement the Grant Park master plan to create new active and passive open spaces.
3. Create Wacker Pier and a new public institution or museum. Renovate the Coast Guard Station.
4. Continue decking over the railroad in Grant Park to create new open spaces and minimize barriers.
5. Expand and complete Monroe Street Harbor.
6. Increase wetland plantings at the perimeter of Meigs Field.
7. Create new parkland over the railroad at Central Station.
8. Widen the lakefront path from North Avenue beach to Olive Park by 100 feet and create a new landscaped embankment.
9. Integrate park lands with the Jardine Water Filtration Plant.

Key Chicago River Recommendations

NEAR NORTH

10. Add a new boat house, pedestrian bridge and river edge landscape at the North Avenue turning basin
11. Enhance landscaping along the west side of Goose Island
12. Create a new recreational and environmental resource along the east side of Goose Island
13. Ensure continuous river access through the Montgomery Ward site to connect with parks at Hobbie and Erie Streets.
14. Create Du Sable Park at the mouth of the Chicago River
15. Create an active riverwalk with commercial uses along the north side of the Main Branch from the lake to Wolf Point.
16. Create new public space at the Sun Times-Trump Tower Chicago site.
17. Create a new public park at Wolf Point.

THE EXPANDED LOOP

18. Create a continuous pedestrian riverwalk along Wacker Drive on the Main Branch from Lake Street to the lakefront as part of the Wacker Drive improvements.
19. Develop a riverfront plaza on the west bank of the South Branch between Randolph and Lake Streets.
20. Develop a public riverfront plaza at 310 South Wacker Drive.
21. Create new riverfront open space at the Old Main Post Office along with its redevelopment.

SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH

22. Create a new riverfront park at Franklin Point.
23. Create a continuous public river park on the east side of the Chicago River to provide public access from Harrison Street to Ping Tom Park.
24. Expand Ping Tom Park.
25. Achieve a continuous open space corridor along the west side of the Chicago River.
26. Implement Origins Park plan at the South Turning Basin.
27. Expand Origins Park to serve the Bridgeport neighborhood.

Key City Park and Plaza Recommendations

NEAR NORTH

28. Implement plans for Walter Payton Academy Campus Park.
29. Develop new park in the Near Northwest Neighborhood as new residential development occurs.
30. Develop a new park at the Fort Dearborn Post Office site at Dearborn and Ohio Streets.
31. Create a new park at the northeast corner of Chicago Avenue and State Street.
32. Create Kinzie Park at Kinzie and DesPlaines Streets.
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THE EXPANDED LOOP

34. Create a new park to serve the Lakeshore East neighborhood.
35. Develop Jefferson Plaza at Lake Street and Jefferson Street.
36. Develop new parks over the Hubbard Street Tunnel.
37. Create a new park over the Kennedy Expressway between Monroe and Madison Streets to connect the West Loop with Greek Town.
38. Reconfigure Pritzker Park at State and Van Buren Streets.
39. Create Old St. Pat's Park at Adams and Des Plaines Streets.

THE SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH

40. Complete a new park at Taylor and Wells Streets.
41. Complete Mark Twain Park at 15th Place and Indiana Avenue.
42. Complete University Village neighborhood parks
43. Complete the Jones High School Campus Park.
44. Develop new riverfront parks as new neighborhoods will develop on the east bank of the South Branch of the Chicago River.
45. Expand the Jefferson Playlot in Pilsen at 17th and Jefferson Streets.
46. Improve park at the South Loop Annex School site.
47 Complete park at 24th and Federal Streets
48. Create a new park at Stearns Quarry in Bridgeport

Key Greenway Recommendations

49. Improve landscaping along expressway corridors and intersections throughout the Central Area.
50. Create a "green" intersection at the Ohio Street feeder from the Kennedy Expressway.
51. Create a "green" intersection and a gateway feature at the intersection of the Eisenhower and Kennedy Expressways
52. Expand sidewalks and landscaping over the Kennedy Expressway connecting the West Loop with Greektown.
53. Develop a new greenway along the St. Charles Airline

CHAPTER 5

District Recommendations

Figure 5.1
Central Area Districts

1. The Expanded Loop
2. The Near North
3. The South Loop and the Near South Side

The expanded Loop is downtown Chicago from the lake on the east to the Kennedy Expressway on the west, and from Congress Parkway on the south to the main branch of the Chicago River on the north. It includes the Central Loop, where most office growth will continue to cluster, the West Loop which will expand the office core west to the Kennedy Expressway, and the East Loop where older buildings house a mix of uses.

The Near North extends from the river on the south to Division Street on the north, and from the lake on the east to Halsted on the west.

The South Loop extends from Congress Parkway in the north to Roosevelt Road, and the Near South Side extends from this point to the Stevenson Expressway on the south. Both are bounded on the east by the lake and Halsted Street on the west.

District Recommendations

The following section of the plan shows how its guiding themes will shape development in the three major geographic districts:

- **THE EXPANDED LOOP**
- **THE NEAR NORTH**
- **THE SOUTH LOOP AND THE NEAR SOUTH SIDE**

These Districts are comprised of corridors, neighborhoods and special places and industrial areas, each with their own unique characteristics. Some of these districts will experience more significant change than others in the coming years. These may involve shifts in land use, changes in the overall density of development or changes in character. Other districts may see changes in infrastructure, transit and open spaces, while their essential role and character within the Central Area will remain unchanged. The development concept for the Central Area is based on continued office growth in the Central Loop and expansion of the high-density office district west into the West Loop. Higher density, mixed use development will also be directed to the Central Area's major corridors. This concept will be reflected in a new strategy for zoning in the Central Area.

Regardless of the diversity of the Central Area's districts and the development that will occur within them, all should reflect the following commitments.

BUILD GREAT PLACES
Great places are created when the public and private realm work together. Natural features, streets, parks and buildings can be organized and designed to respect and recognize each other. Diversity and cohesion can achieve balance. Efficiency and bustle can co-exist. The scale and density of new development will require special attention to the effect on the neighborhood, district and entire Central Area. The most significant buildings must be protected, the distinctive identity of special areas maintained, and the most spectacular views conserved.

CREATE SUCCESSFUL OPEN SPACES
Chicago's Central Area open space system is remarkable. A continued commitment to the Lakefront, the Chicago River Corridor and the system of parks and plazas will maintain this legacy. Many new open spaces will be created where new opportunities arise as new development occurs. Others will require creative approaches to streets, river edges or rail corridors. New open spaces must be visible, accessible and usable by all.

ENSURE A WALKABLE ENVIRONMENT THROUGHOUT
The life of street is one of the Central Area's most remarkable features. Sidewalks also serve as a primary transit system, moving thousands of people around the Central Area on a daily basis. All streets in the Central Area should have usable, pedestrian friendly and attractive sidewalks.

MAINTAIN THE DIVERSITY OF THE CENTRAL AREA
The economic diversity of Chicago's Central Area has been a source of its long-term success while other central cities have declined. With corporate headquarters and banking, finance, insurance, government, law, advertising and design sectors, employment has continued to grow. Many uses - other than high-density office - now make up the Central Area, with retail, cultural, educational and residential uses contributing to its bustle and excitement.

MAINTAIN A CRITICAL DENSITY
The density of the Central Area is key to its success. Even in an age when everybody is connected electronically, there is no substitute for proximity in maintaining and building a diverse, competitive central business district. Functionally, this level of economic activity is most efficiently accessed and served when it is compact. The density of the Central Area must be maintained.

EMPHASIZE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
The City of Chicago will encourage the development of a new generation of high performance, energy efficient, resource conserving buildings and infrastructure in the Central Area. The city will take the lead by retrofitting public buildings to save energy and reduce emissions, creating rooftop gardens, landscaping streets and emphasizing public transportation.

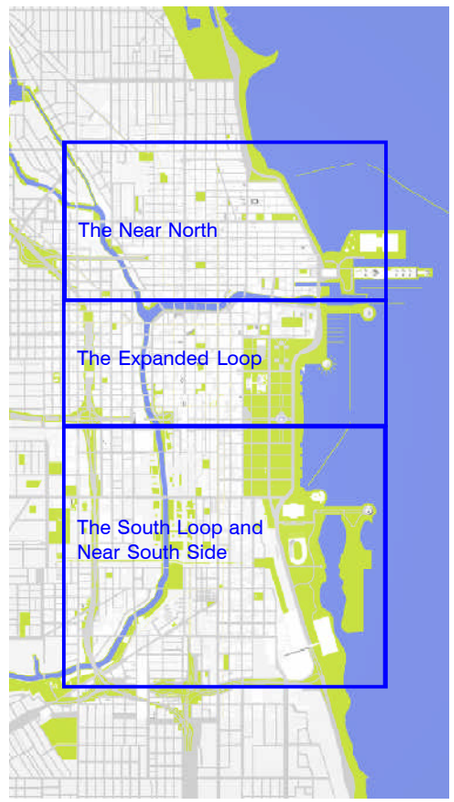


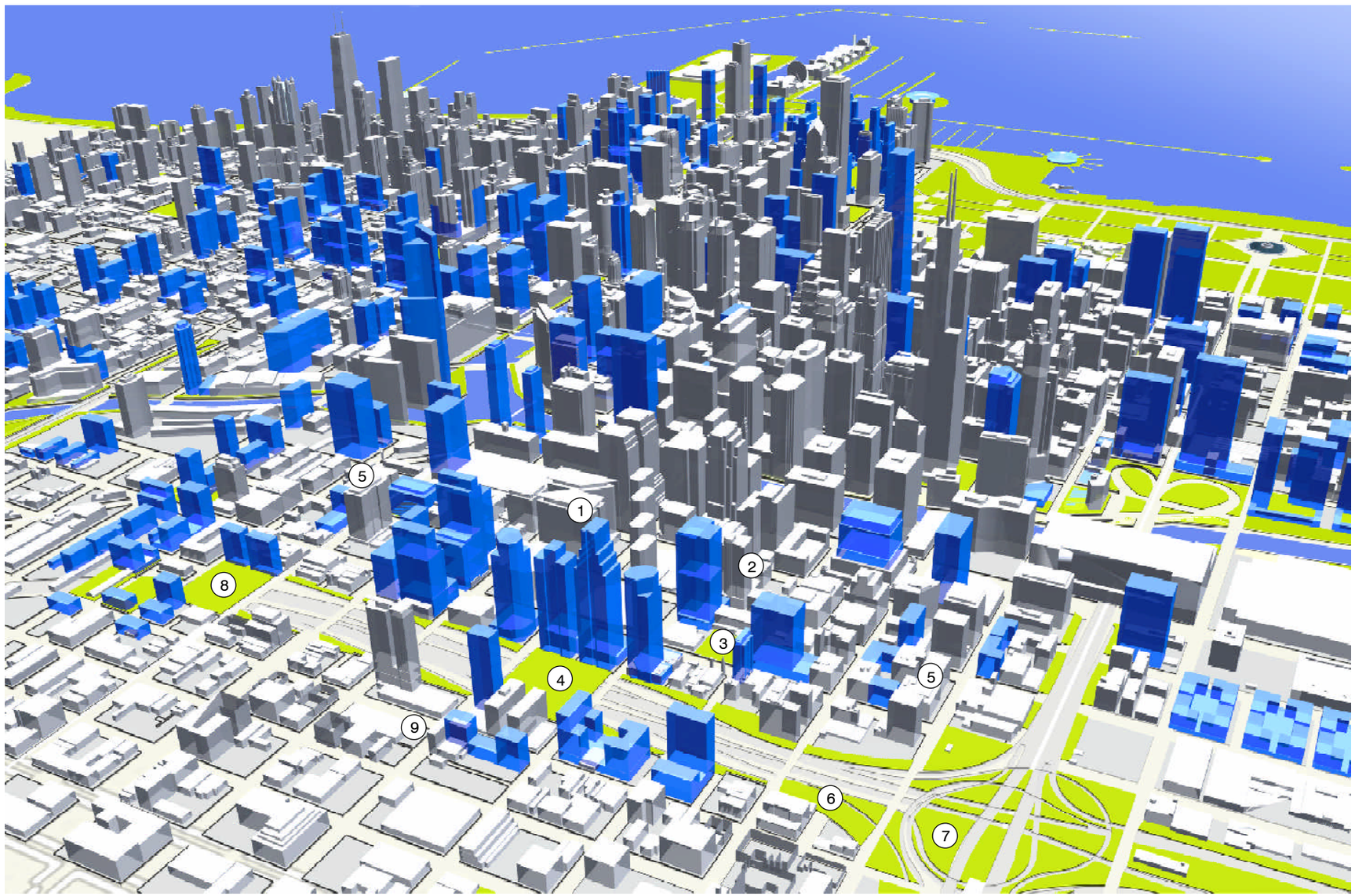
Figure 5.2
Central Area Districts

Figure 5.3
The Expanded Loop

The Central and West Loop will accommodate the anticipated growth in the Central Area's office market and employment.

KEY WEST LOOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop high density office uses in the West Loop.
2. Create a main street on Clinton Street above the planned multi-story, multi-modal West Loop Transportation Center
3. Create a new park at Adams Street and Des Plaines Street
4. Develop a new park over the Kennedy Expressway to connect the West Loop to Greek Town and the Near West Side
5. Allow for infill residential development at the Jackson Loft District and the Fulton River District.
6. Landscape improvements along the Kennedy and Eisenhower Expressways
7. Develop a gateway feature and landscaping at the intersection of the Eisenhower and Kennedy Expressways
8. Develop new parks over the Hubbard Street tunnel.
9. Step development down from the West Loop to the Near West Side.



The Expanded Loop

Development Framework

Fifty years ago, the Chicago central business district was largely confined to the 35 blocks bounded by the Loop elevated tracks, with additional development along Michigan Avenue and Wacker Drive. Today the business core extends from Michigan Avenue to Canal Street, and from the Main Branch of the Chicago River to Congress Parkway.

The most dramatic changes have taken place in the western part of the Loop. Streets such as Franklin that were back waters twenty years ago are now home to prestigious office buildings. The West Loop commuter stations were once at the fringes of downtown; now development is beginning to engulf them. It is only a matter of time before new buildings replace the West Loop's surface parking lots.

The Expanded Loop will change significantly over the next 20 years. The Central Loop and the West Loop will see intense office development, while the East Loop will continue to evolve into a vibrant mixed-use district. Historic buildings will be preserved.

The Central Loop from State Street to Franklin Street- Continued Infill

The Central Loop will remain as a high-density employment center for banking, legal, and financial services and government offices, among others. High density commercial office development will in-fill available sites, while older buildings will be replaced or renovated to meet contemporary needs. Approximately 70% of the new office development and new jobs will be east of the river.

Figure 5.4 Adams Street and Des Plaines Street today.

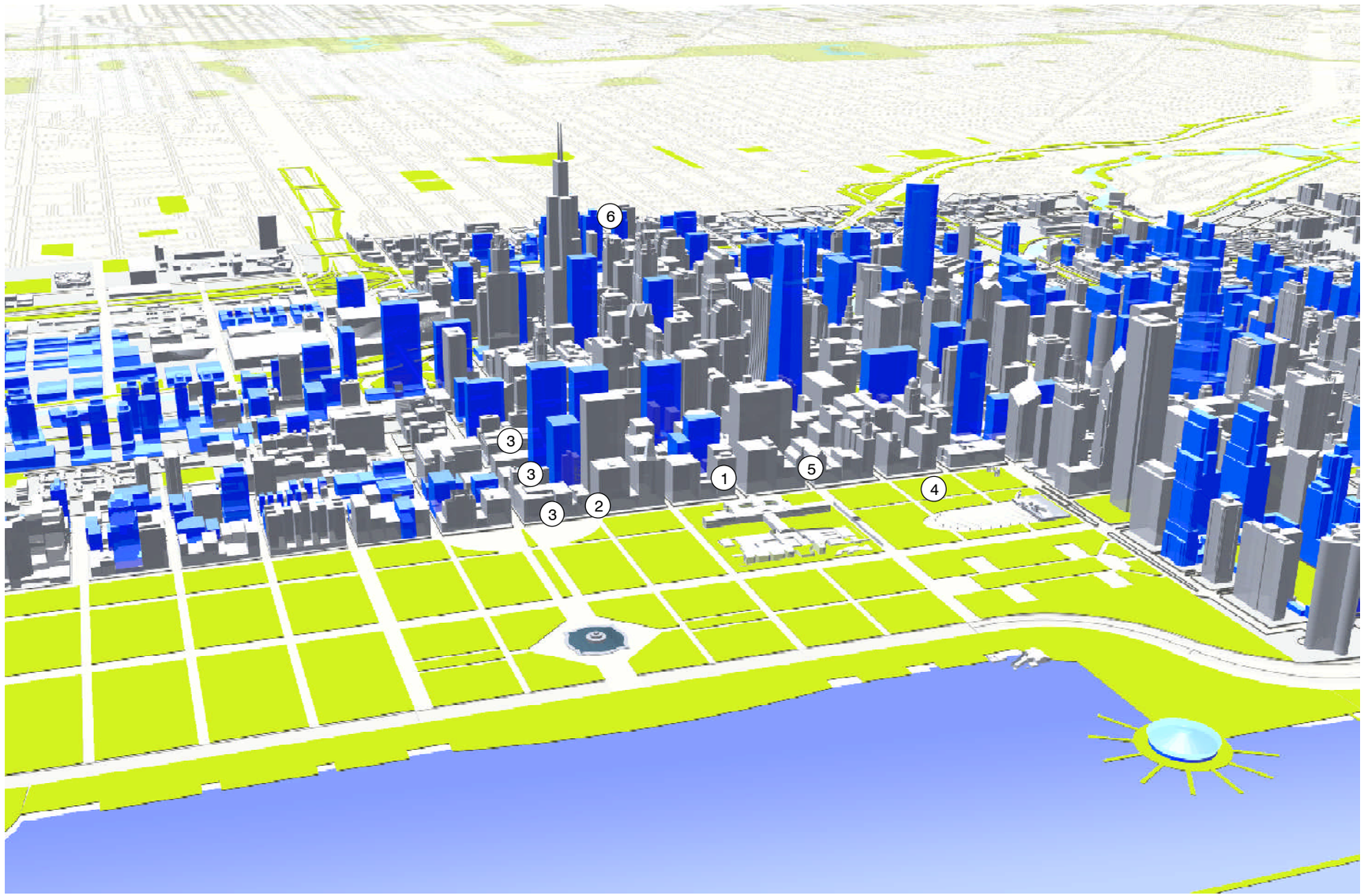
Figure 5.5 Adams Street and Des Plaines Street, with Old St. Pat's Park and new West Loop office buildings, in 2020.

Figure 5.6
The East Loop

The East Loop's vitality will be strengthened.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Residential, cultural, educational and business uses will occupy historic buildings
2. The Michigan Avenue Street Wall will be preserved
3. A vibrant mix of retail will be encouraged on State Street, Wabash Street and Michigan Avenue
4. Millennium Park will be completed
5. An east-west busway will strengthen transit connections between the East Loop and West Loop
6. Pedestrian connections between West Loop transit stations and the East Loop will be strengthened



The City of Chicago is committed to preserving the areas historic buildings and districts by encouraging creative adaptive re-uses.

Dearborn Street will continue to be a significant address for government and commercial offices, with employment building of transit service provided by the CTA's Blue Line. South, toward Congress Parkway, Dearborn will have a mix of uses, with residents living close to smaller offices and specialty retail stores. At Washington Street, Dearborn Street will be part of the Theatre District, offering performances and theatre-related restaurants.

LaSalle Street will continue to be a center for Chicago's banking and financial community housed in both historic and contemporary buildings. LaSalle Street will continue to be a bustling retail street, catering to local workers.

The West Loop from Franklin Street to the Kennedy Expressway - Building a New Urban District

The office core will expand into the West Loop between Lake Street and Jackson Boulevard. The West Loop will accommodate more than 30% of the anticipated growth in the Central Area's office market. To provide expansion room for the growing office core, the West Loop will be up-zoned to permit high-density office buildings comparable to those in the Central Loop.

The West Loop will clearly be a business district, but the mix of uses will shape its character. While high-density office development will be the focus of new construction, the district's residents and visitors will continue to add to its vitality. Well over 6,000 people currently live in and near the Loop between State Street and the Kennedy Expressway, with most living west of the Chicago River in areas such as the Fulton River District and the Jackson Loft District. Mixed-use buildings that combine residential, hotel or other uses with offices will be added. The residential neighborhoods immediately north and south of the West Loop office district will reinforce the vitality that this diversity of uses brings to the Central Area.

A high quality public realm will be emphasized. Landscaped sidewalks and well-lit streets will encourage people to walk. New buildings will be built up to the sidewalk with storefronts and active ground floor uses that provide vitality and light. Curb cuts for service and parking will be limited on main pedestrian and transit corridors.

The West Loop's proximity to the Kennedy Expressway offers an opportunity to create a high-profile image for the area. High standards of design will be encouraged for new buildings adjacent to the Kennedy, which will be seen by thousands of motorists each day.

Clinton Street is envisioned as the "main street" of the West Loop business district. Continuous retail on the ground floor, landscaping and outdoor seating for restaurants and cafes will give Clinton Street vitality. These shops will serve the high volume of pedestrians using the new West Loop Transportation Center (WLTC), a multi-level facility for buses, rapid transit, and commuter and inter-city rail to be built beneath Clinton.

The East Loop from Michigan Avenue and Illinois Center to State Street - Preservation and Reuse

Behind the historic facades, East Loop buildings are undergoing profound change as the office market moves on and residential, cultural, and educational uses take its place. The East Loop has become an academic center, with educational institutions building or converting new dormitory, classroom, and office space along Michigan Avenue, Wabash Avenue, and State Street. Class C buildings along Michigan and Wabash are being converted from office to residential use, and new housing is under construction. State Street's position as the city's shopping hub has been reinforced with the opening of several major stores and the removal of the transit mall. Major expansion programs at cultural institutions including the Art Institute of Chicago and the Chicago Symphony are drawing additional visitors to the area. Hotel activity in the area remains strong, and will likely continue given the East Loop's proximity to premier cultural attractions and shopping.

These positive changes will continue to make the Loop a vibrant 24-hour city. New residents support retail around the clock. Visitors to museums and downtown college campuses are also customers for these retail establishments. These visitors, along with theater district patrons, will continue to boost East Loop restaurants and hotels, giving a new glow to an area that once was deserted after 6 p.m. Millennium Park will add a new dimension to the mix, helping to strengthen the Michigan Avenue retail corridor from the Chicago River south to Randolph Street.

The City of Chicago is committed to preserving the area's historic buildings and districts by encouraging creative adaptive reuse. Renovations and new development in the East Loop must respect its historic character and urban fabric. The impressive streetwalls that have been signature features of Chicago for more than a century will be preserved at the Michigan Boulevard Historic District.

As the Loop continues to expand westward, the East Loop will remain connected to the emerging office district. A new East - West busway will provide quick, convenient transit service between Michigan Avenue and the West Loop.

Figure 5.7
Clinton Street today.

Figure 5.8
Clinton Street in 2020. Clinton Street is envisioned as the "main street" of the West Loop, with access to the West Loop Transportation Center, retail and office space.

Transportation

Major investment in bus and rail facilities will enable new workers to reach their jobs in the expanded Loop quickly and conveniently.

Loop transportation improvements were described in detail in Chapter 3.2. They include:

- The West Loop Transportation Center
- The East-West transitway
- Continuing renovation of Loop subway and 'L' stations.

Open Space

- A continuous riverwalk extending from Lake Michigan to Congress Parkway will create a great new public place and pedestrian alternative to crowded streets.
- The Grant Park framework plan and Monroe Harbor improvements will complete Daniel Burnham's vision for the lakefront.
- Millennium Park will provide open space and performance venues.
- A new regional park will be created adjacent to a new elementary school as part of the Lakeshore East residential development in Illinois Center.
- A park will be built at Adams and Des Plaines Streets to serve office workers and local residents.
- Larger open spaces will be focused where the Chicago River meets major streets, including at Congress Parkway.
- Decking over a section of the Kennedy Expressway in the West Loop may also create additional park land and eliminate existing barriers between the loop and neighborhoods west of the expressway.

Adjacent district: The Near West Side

Recommendations from the 1999 Near West Side Plan for the area west of Halsted Street are compatible with and complement these recommendations for West Loop. The Near West Side Plan identifies significant development potential including opportunities to expand existing institutional campuses and develop new ones. The district can also be promoted as a location for commercial office space.

Recommendations include improving the streetscaping to help define the identity of the district, and encouraging residential uses, cultural uses and ground floor neighborhood-oriented retail. New parks will be developed in the east and central areas of the Near West Side that are currently underserved.

New development should be consistent with the district's loft character, and should make use of existing structures through adaptive reuse. In general, development should step down from the high-density corridor at the Kennedy and Eisenhower Expressways. Higher density residential development will be located along the east side of Halsted adjacent to the Kennedy Expressway. Low to moderate scale housing will be located elsewhere. Higher density development will also be located along the Madison Street corridor. If development in the area continues at its current pace, new strategies will be needed to deal with increased traffic congestion and parking.

Figure 5.9
Proposed improvements to stairs leading to the 'L'

Figure 5.10
Existing Wabash Avenue

Figure 5.11
Proposed Rebuilding of Wabash Avenue
Rebuilding the sidewalks, restoring the 'L' , addressing landscape and lighting will strengthen the Wabash corridor, with its strong specialty retail districts, office and residential uses. The 'L' and its stations should be restored throughout the Loop.

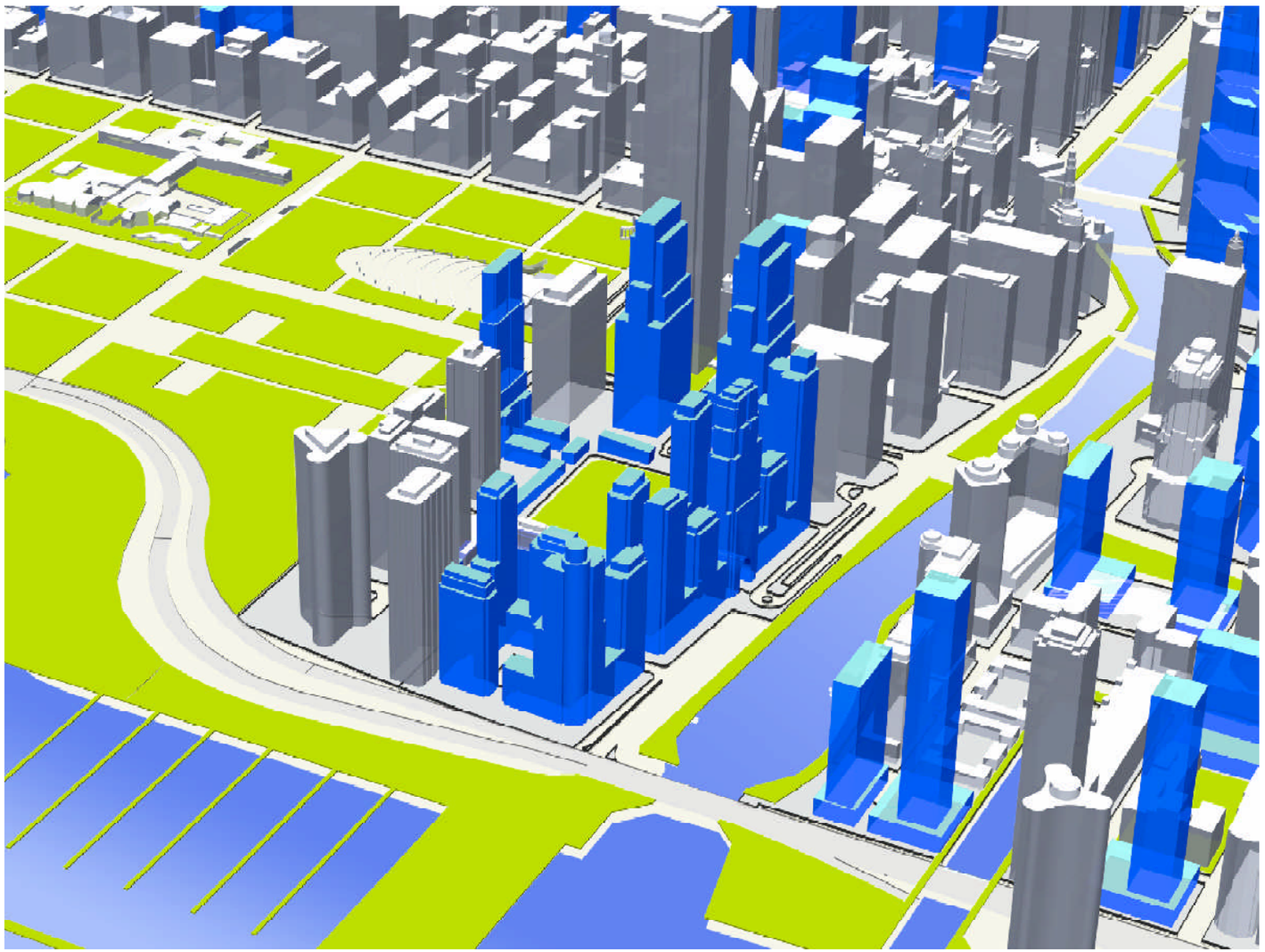


Figure 5.12
Proposed Lakeshore East
The new Lakeshore East neighborhood will provide 4,850 residential units, a new elementary school, office, retail and.
a new 6-acre regional park. This neighborhood development will complete Illinois Center.

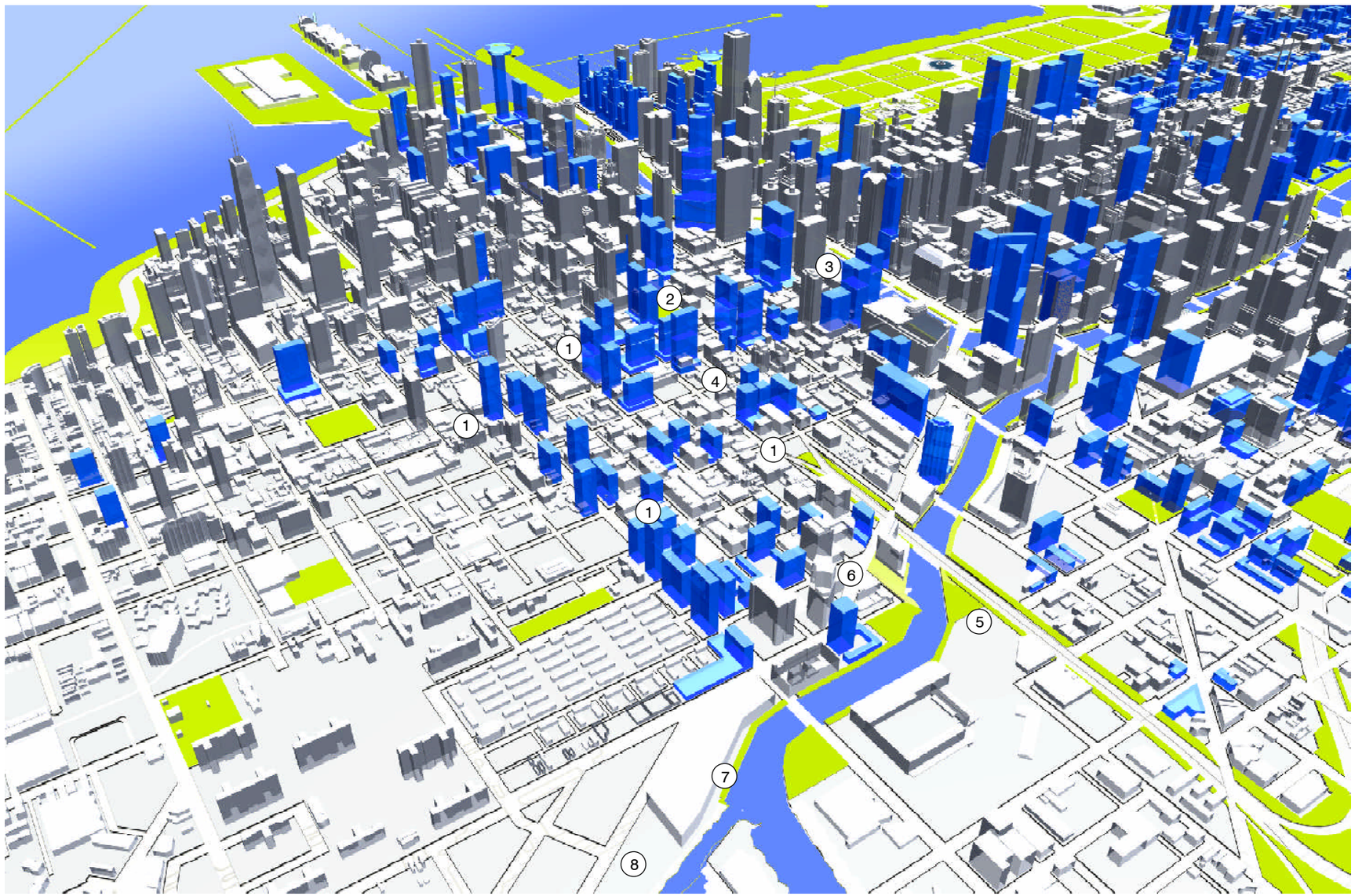
Figure 5.13
Existing Lakeshore East

Figure 5.14
The Near North

Higher density development will be directed to major corridors.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Higher density mixed use infill on major corridors
2. A new park at the Fort Dearborn Post Office
3. Active uses along the main branch of the Chicago River
4. Sensitive reuse and infill development in the Courthouse, the Mart and the Gallery Districts
5. Landscape improvements along the Ohio Street feeder ramp
6. Completing Erie Park at the North Branch of the Chicago River
7. A riverwalk along the North Branch of the Chicago River
8. A recreational and environmental resource along the North Canal on the east side of Goose Island



Corridors will be established to focus high density mixed-use development, while residential neighborhoods and special places will be conserved. Improved transit and new parks will serve the Near North.

The Near North

Context for Development

The Near North is comprised of River North, North Michigan Avenue, Streeterville, and portions of the Gold Coast. The district is the city's destination retail and tourism hub and home to most of its major hotels.

North Michigan Avenue has been the city's dominant shopping corridor since the late 1970s. Generating well over a billion dollars in annual sales, it has become a major tourist destination, attracting visitors from throughout the U.S. and abroad. It is an exemplary mixed-use district, combining shops, offices, hotels, residences, education and medical institutions, and cultural and entertainment attractions.

Near North residential developments in recent years have consisted mostly of new construction, predominantly high-rise but including some townhouses. *Particularly active areas include:*

- The River East Planned Development in south Streeterville
- The corridor between Michigan Avenue and Dearborn Street from the Chicago River's Main Branch to Oak Street
- Western River North between Orleans Street and the North Branch
- The west part of River North
- Kinzie Park and Kinzie Station

Adaptive reuse of loft buildings has slowed as the supply of suitable structures dwindles, but continues to be a strong component of the Near North housing market. Recent loft conversions include the former Montgomery Ward catalogue and administrative center at Chicago Avenue.

The Near North has a significant concentration of hospitals affiliated with Northwestern University: Northwestern Memorial Hospital, the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, and the Veteran's Administration Chicago-Lakeside Medical Center.

Institutional growth is strong, with Loyola University and Northwestern Memorial Hospital undergoing expansion. With 5800 employees, Northwestern Memorial Hospital is a major Chicago employer. Since 1998, hospital admissions have grown by 37% to 39,900 inpatient admissions, and are expected to increase to 45,000 by 2004. Northwestern is the only Level One trauma center serving the Central Area. It brings people from throughout the region to the Central Area. The hospital will continue to expand in the Streeterville community.

New or expanded cultural and entertainment attractions in the Near North over the past twenty years include the Museum of Contemporary Art, Navy Pier, and the Ohio/Ontario entertainment district.

Development Framework

Mixed-use corridors will provide a focus for new higher density development, the character of neighborhoods and special places will be conserved, and historic buildings will be preserved while great new architecture is encouraged.

The *North Michigan-State Corridor* consists of Michigan Avenue, Rush Street, Wabash Avenue, and State Street and stretches from the Chicago River to Division Street. This corridor will continue to be a major destination for shopping, entertainment and visitor accommodations.

The *Ontario/Grand Corridor*, consisting of Ontario Street, Ohio Street and Grand Avenue between Franklin Street and Lake Shore Drive will be a mixed-use corridor that emphasizes retail, entertainment and office at lower levels, with residential above.

The *Chicago Avenue Corridor* between the North Branch and Michigan Avenue will continue as a high-density mixed-use corridor with institutions, retail, hotels and residential development. Further west, at Chicago Avenue and the Chicago River, the Montgomery Ward redevelopment will help to link River North to the Cabrini-Green neighborhood. As along all Central Area corridors, high-density residential neighborhood development will stimulate retail to serve surrounding neighborhoods.

The *LaSalle Street Corridor*, with a mix of residential and hotel development arrayed along a broad, landscaped boulevard, will be a new Park Avenue for Chicago, from Chicago Avenue south to the Chicago River. Larger scale development should be focused along the LaSalle Street corridor.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND SPECIAL PLACES RECOMMENDATIONS

The Near North includes quiet residential enclaves, historic districts, and other special character areas.

Streeterville will continue to grow as a mixed-use neighborhood that has residents, hotels, hospitals, universities and entertainment. New development must be managed to achieve compatibility with neighbors while recognizing this as one of the Central Area's higher density neighborhoods. New neighborhood parks, the Riverwalk and expanded lakefront open spaces will be used by residents and will attract visitors. New transit will reduce reliance on cars by residents, workers and visitors. Construction of stand-alone parking structures will be limited. Parking and access to Navy Pier needs to be managed to reduce disruption to the neighborhoods. Transit shuttles linking to Grant Park garages would help reduce traffic in Streeterville.

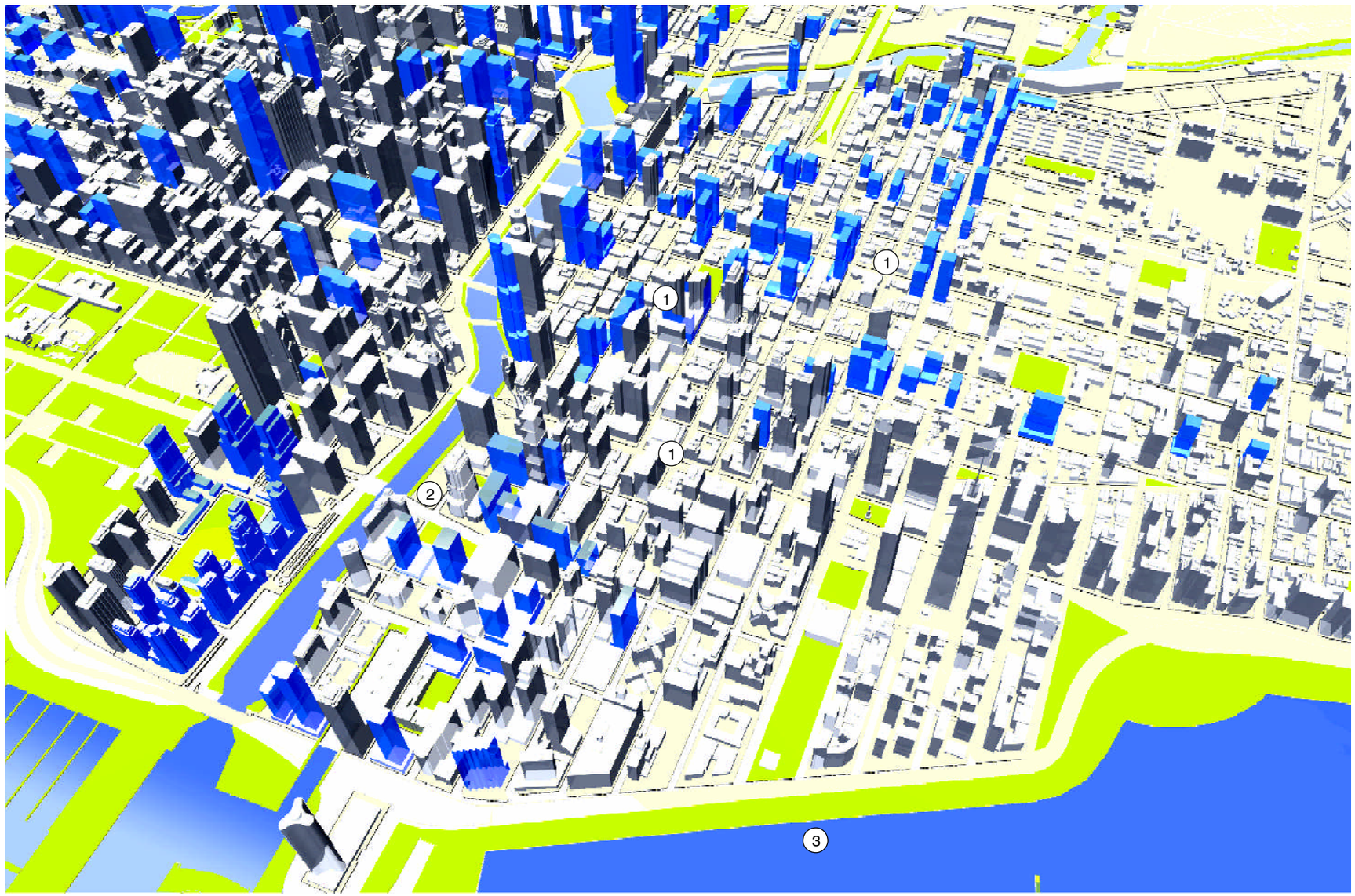
River North will continue its development as a mix of restaurants, entertainment, hotel, retail and residential uses. It is shaped by three special character districts which will be maintained through lower-density zoning, Planned Development review for larger projects, height limits, contextual facade design, and the designation of conservation districts in consultation with local business and property owners, residents, and public officials.

Figure 5.15
The Near North

Higher density development will be directed to major corridors.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Higher density mixed-use development on major corridors. Major corridors are LaSalle, Chicago, Grand/Ontario, and Michigan Avenue.
2. A riverwalk with commercial activities will be developed along the north bank of the Main Branch of the Chicago River
3. Widen and landscape the lakefront open space between Olive Park and North Avenue Beach



- *The Gallery District* between the Chicago River and LaSalle Street north of Erie Street was previously a light manufacturing district and has found new life as a center for Chicago's art and design community, and a place for small offices. The loft character of the area will be preserved through sensitive rehabilitation. New buildings will respect existing building heights by limiting heights or by setting back upper floors.

- *The Courthouse District* is a collection of historic buildings in the vicinity of the old County Courthouse at Hubbard and Dearborn Streets. This attractive ensemble of small Victorian commercial structures provides homes for many small shops and businesses. These buildings will continue to thrive as a distinctive Near North address.

- *The Mart District* immediately north of the Merchandise Mart includes residences, restaurants, specialty stores and small and mid-size businesses located in older loft buildings and store fronts, as well as newer residential and office buildings. The Mart District will see continued renovation and new development for a similar collection of uses.

Transportation

Existing Near North transit stops will be upgraded, and a transitway will provide convenient access to the West Loop commuter stations

- The Carroll Avenue Transitway extending along the north bank of the Chicago River from Michigan Avenue to the Apparel Mart will improve transit access between the Near North and the West Loop commuter rail stations. Buses exiting the transitway will fan out into the district to provide convenient access to major Near North destinations.
- The CTA Red Line subway station at Grand Avenue and State Street will be renovated in the same manner as the recently completed station at Chicago Avenue and State Street. The Chicago Avenue Brown/Purple Line 'L' station will also undergo major rehabilitation, including lengthened platforms and new entrances at Franklin/Superior and Franklin/Chicago.

Open Space

New parks will be created throughout the Near North to serve residents and workers.

- A new park will replace the city-owned Kraft Building at Grand Avenue and Peshtigo Court. It will include a playground and an underground parking structure.
- The lakefront promenade between Olive Park and Oak Street Beach, will be widened and landscaped.
- Improved pedestrian access to the lakefront via additional under- or overpasses across Lake Shore Drive will be explored.
- A new park will be created at the Fort Dearborn Postal Station at Dearborn and Ontario Streets.
- The courtyard at the rehabilitated Tree Studios at State Street and Ohio Street will be open to the public.

Several river edge enhancements will be implemented, including:

- A large park east of Lake Shore Drive at the mouth of the Chicago River will commemorate early settler Jean-Baptiste Point DuSable.
- A multi-level river promenade will be provided as part of the redevelopment of the Sun-Times site on the Main Branch at Wabash Avenue.
- Riverside open space will be provided at Wolf Point as the site is developed.
- A public riverwalk will be provided along the North Branch throughout the redeveloped Montgomery Ward site from Erie Street to Hobbie Street (1030N), a distance of about one-half mile.
- New riverside parks will be provided at Hobbie Street and at Erie Street adjacent to the existing Erie street-end park.
- Wetland planting in the North Branch Canal will improve water quality and provide habitat for migrating waterfowl.
- A public park will be provided at Kinzie Street and Jefferson Street as part of the Kinzie Station development.

Adjacent Districts

Near Northwest Side

A plan was completed in September 2002 for the Near Northwest Study Area, bounded roughly by Grand, Chicago, Milwaukee and Western Avenues, just beyond the Fulton River District at the edge of the expanded Loop. Its development framework calls for strong neighborhood corridors that offer a mix of retail, entertainment, office, work space and residential uses, and are served by transit. Residential development should respect the historic context of neighborhoods including Eckhart Park, Noble Square East Village, and Ukrainian Village.

Transportation enhancements should be designed to ensure adequate and accessible service and to maintain good traffic circulation. Upgraded open space and new neighborhood parks are a high priority, as are pedestrian-friendly, bicycle-oriented landscaped streets.

Near North Redevelopment Initiative

The area bounded by Chicago Avenue, North Avenue, Wells Street and Halsted Street is the near North Tax Increment Finance District, and the subject of the Near North Redevelopment Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to create a mixed-income community, and to improve the area through public investment in schools, parks and other amenities. Redevelopment of land owned by the city or the Chicago Housing Authority will create mixed-income communities with the following ratios: 50% market-rate, 30% public housing and 20% affordable rental units.

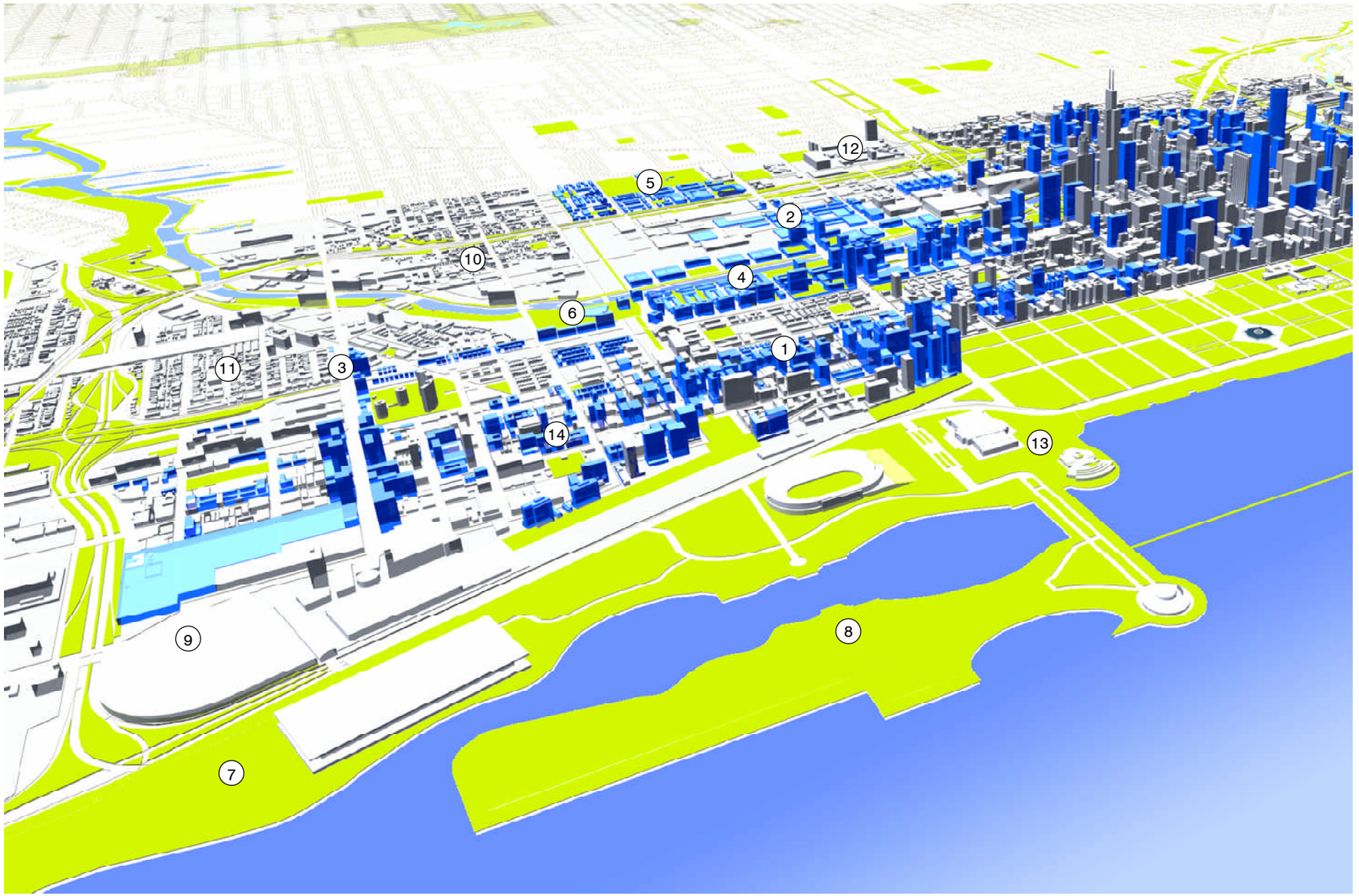
Public investment and private redevelopment are transforming the neighborhood. A new library, police station, park, elementary and high schools as well as a retail mall have brought new services to residents. The area is well served by bus and rapid transit. Open space improvement will continue, with plans to expand facilities at Seward Park, improved public access to Stanton Park and a new two-acre park.

Figure 5.16
The South Loop and Near South

The South Loop and the Near South provide the greatest opportunities for new development.

SOUTH LOOP AND NEAR SOUTH PROJECT AREAS

1. The Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor
2. The Roosevelt Road Corridor
3. The Cermak Road Corridor
4. The South River Neighborhood
5. University Village
6. Ping Tom Park
7. Burnham Park
8. Northerly Island Park
9. McCormick Place
10. Pilsen
11. Chinatown
12. University of Illinois at Chicago
13. Museum Campus
14. Prairie Avenue District



The South Loop and Near South Side

Context for Development

With the largest amount of vacant land in the Central Area, the South Loop and Near South Side present excellent opportunities for continued residential neighborhood development.

The South Loop and Near South districts experienced a rebirth in the late 1970s with the reclamation of rail yards and printing houses for housing at Dearborn Park and Printer's Row. Since then, strong residential development has occurred throughout the district, including both new construction and loft conversions. Recent developments include Central Station and renovation and infill around Prairie Avenue.

The first wave of residential construction was low-rise, with town homes and loft style buildings. The more recent trend is mid- and high-rise construction, which is likely to become more prevalent due to the proximity to the lake and good transit.

The South Loop, close to the central business district, contains a diverse mix of educational, cultural, office and residential uses. Institutions of higher learning, clustered on the eastern edge of the South Loop, will continue to grow.

The Near South contains a similar mix of uses but is more predominantly residential. Given its comparatively greater distance from the Loop, this area will be more affordable than other parts of the Central Area.

Cultural amenities within the district include the Museum Campus, the Prairie Avenue Landmark District and Museums, and the Motor Row and Michigan Boulevard Landmark Districts. The McCormick Place convention complex dominates the southern lakefront.

West of the River, the district contains one of the major remaining concentrations of distribution and service property in the Central Area, spanning the area between the Dan Ryan Expressway and the river, continuing south to the Pilsen Industrial Corridor. The western edge of the district includes a portion of the UIC campus.

Large parcels of vacant railroad land remain, providing ample opportunity for continued growth. The large undeveloped tracts adjoining the South Branch are the Central Area's best opportunity for significant development along the river.

Development Framework

Mixed-use corridors will provide a focus for new higher density development. The character of existing neighborhoods, historic buildings and districts, and special places will be conserved and a new neighborhood will be created along the South Branch of the Chicago River.

Four corridors will be the focus for new development in the South Loop and the Near South.

- The Michigan Avenue - Wabash Avenue - State Street Corridor
- The Cermak Road Corridor
- The Roosevelt Road Corridor
- The South River Corridor

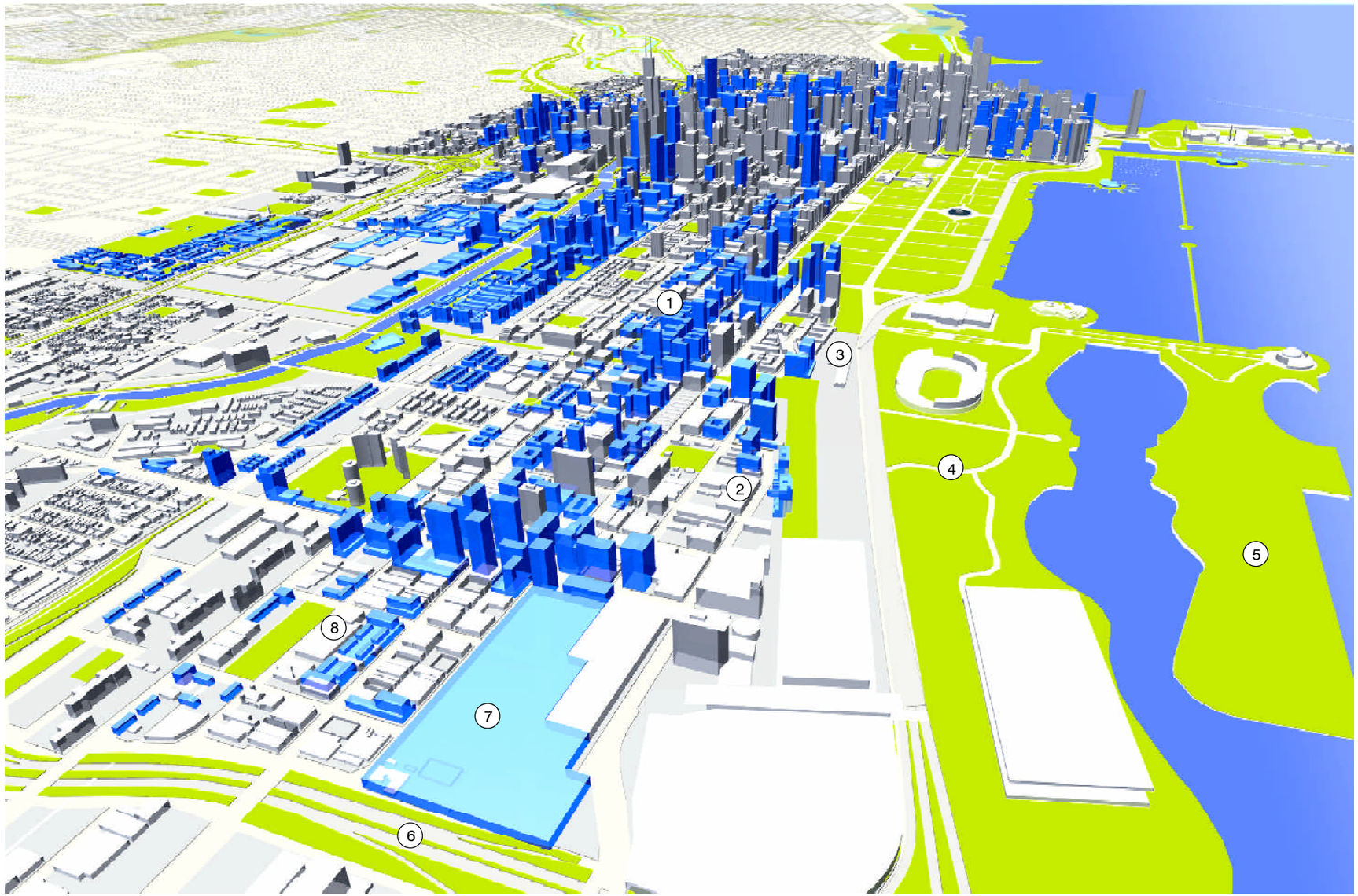
A future corridor addressing higher density housing may occur when Wentworth is extended north to join Wells Street.

Figure 5.17
The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor

Mid- and high-density, mixed-use development will extend from the Loop to McCormick Place and Cermak Road.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. High density, infill, and adaptive reuse along the Michigan - Wabash - State Corridor
2. Preservation and sensitive infill in the Prairie Avenue District respecting the scale and character of this important Landmark District
3. Completion of Central Station residential development
4. Burnham Park improvements as part of Soldier Field redesign
5. Develop Northerly Island Park
6. Landscape improvements along the Stevenson Expressway
7. McCormick Place Expansion
8. Motor Row Redevelopment



The Michigan - Wabash - State Corridor

The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor will continue to develop as a high-density corridor incorporating housing, education, cultural, retail, entertainment and office. The Corridor will link the Cermak Corridor to the Museum Campus, Grant Park and the Loop. Because of the proximity to transit, stacked flats, mid-rise and taller buildings will be encouraged, with densities higher than those in surrounding neighborhoods. The renovation of existing buildings and new construction for educational institutions will continue. Ground floor retail in taller buildings at key intersections and around transit stations will meet the daily needs of residents and workers. New restaurants will also draw in visitors from other neighborhoods and from McCormick Place. The corridor's landscaped pedestrian-oriented streets will be served by transit.

The newly designated Motor Row Historic District runs along Michigan Avenue concentrated from Cermak Road south to the Stevenson Expressway. The 56 buildings in the district represent possibly the world's largest concentration of early auto showrooms and associated businesses. Motor Row will become a new neighborhood and visitor destination that is home to galleries, nightclubs or restaurants and cultural institutions, with offices or loft spaces above. The area may also serve as an incubator for fledgling museums and arts organizations.

Figure 5.18 The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor today.

Figure 5.19 The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor in 2020. Motor Row will become a new neighborhood and visitor destination.

Figure 5.20
The Cermak Road Corridor

The Cermak Road corridor will connect Chinatown, Motor Row, McCormick Place and Lake Michigan.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Mid- and high-density mixed-use infill development along the Cermak Road Corridor
2. McCormick Place expansion with an active, urban edge along the Cermak Road Corridor and along Indiana Avenue
3. Potential new Green Line stop near Cermak Road
4. Complete park at 24th and South Federal Streets
5. Landscape improvements along the Stevenson Expressway
6. An expanded Ping Tom Park with a neighborhood field house
7. Redevelopment of the Hilliard and Ickes Homes

The Cermak Road Corridor - The Connection for an Emerging Urban District

The Cermak Road Corridor offers the potential for a higher-density, transit-based residential neighborhood connecting the Lakefront, McCormick Place and Chinatown. Some hotels may be constructed particularly in proximity to McCormick Place. Ground floor retail, restaurant and service uses will add vitality. Future transportation enhancements (including a revitalized Metra station on Cermak Road at McCormick Place and a new CTA Green Line station near Cermak and State) will encourage transit use.

McCormick Place is one of the city's great visitor magnets, attracting some 4 million people annually to trade shows and conventions. McCormick Place will continue to expand and is expected to add an additional 800,000 square feet by 2007. McCormick Place will also build stronger connections with surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas, including Motor Row, Prairie Avenue and Chinatown.

The new Cermak Elementary School and Teacher's Academy is a major asset for the community. It includes a new neighborhood park and community center. Chinatown will continue to thrive as a distinctive residential community and a long-standing visitor destination.

Figure 5.21 The Cermak Road Corridor today.

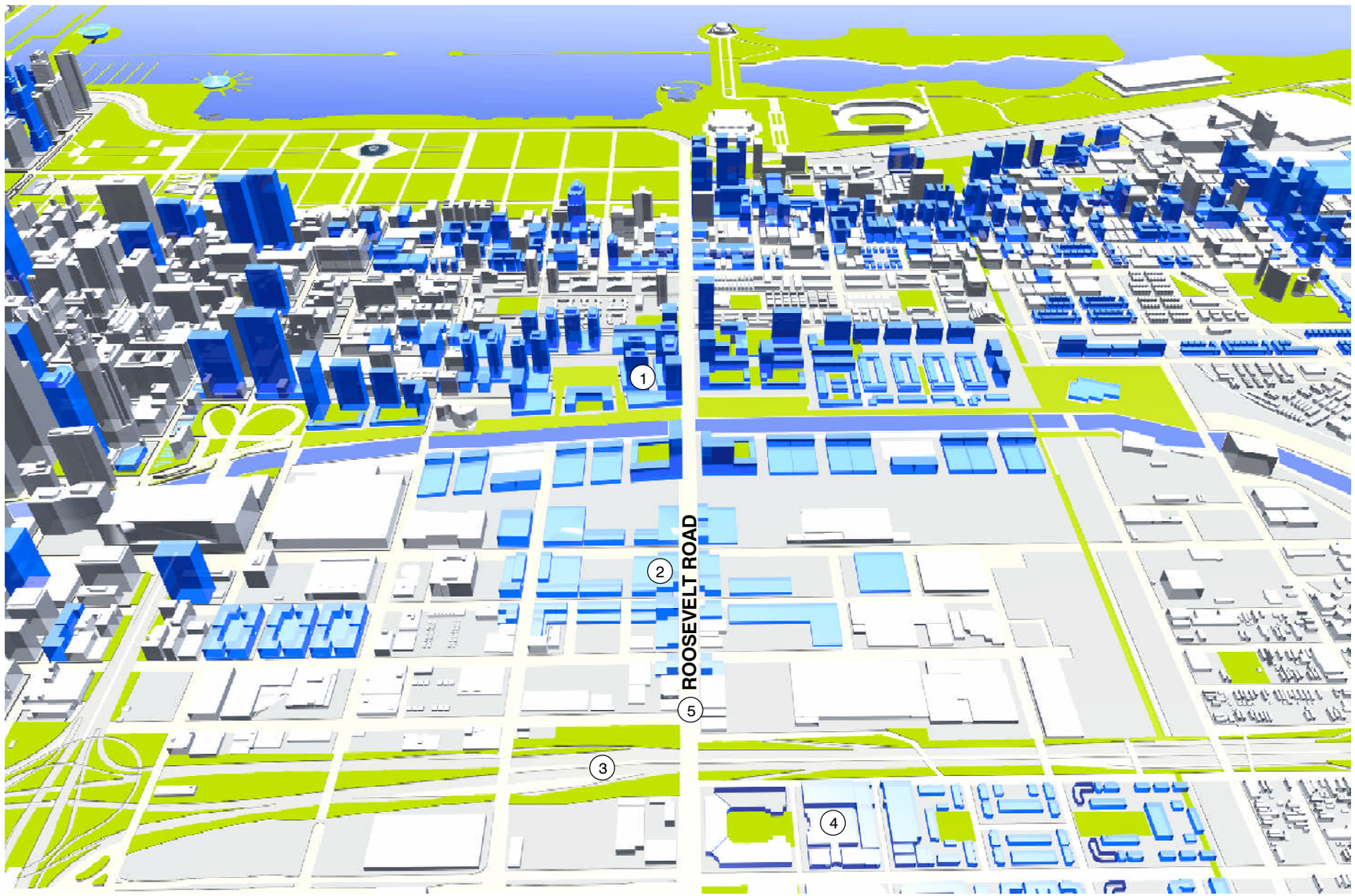
Figure 5.22 The Cermak Road Corridor in 2020. Cermak Road will be developed as a high-density mixed-use corridor linking Pilsen and Chinatown to McCormick Place and the Lakefront.

Figure 5.23
The Roosevelt Road Corridor

Roosevelt Road will develop as a mixed-use corridor, emphasizing regional retail, west of the river and mixed-use development east of the river.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. High density residential infill development between the east riverfront and Clark Street
2. Large scale retail west of the Chicago River
3. Landscape improvements along the Dan Ryan Expressway
4. Completion of University Village and Neighborhood parks
5. Roosevelt Road as a gateway boulevard to the Central Area and Museum Campus



The Roosevelt Road Corridor
A Major City Gateway and Urban Boulevard

Roosevelt Road is envisioned as a great urban boulevard that is one of the Central Area's important gateways. Landscaping and lighting should reflect the importance of this civic boulevard, which connects the lakefront and Museum Campus to the new University Village, the redeveloped ABLA Homes, the Illinois Medical District and points west.

Roosevelt Road will be an urban contemporary shopping district that will meet demand for large-scale retail while respecting the city's character. Due to the area's excellent expressway access, stores west of the river will attract customers not only from downtown but also from throughout the city.

To keep the area compact and walkable, the spatial arrangement will be more vertical than that of the typical auto-dominated retail district. Retail buildings will be built out to the sidewalk with parking below or behind. Entries and display windows will face the sidewalk, bringing activity and light to the sidewalk. High quality materials will be used on facades. Upper floors may include housing and office. Front doors of all buildings should face Roosevelt Road.

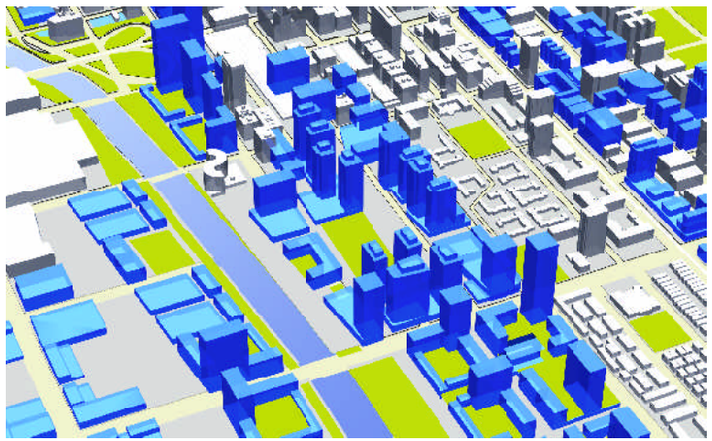


Figure 5.24
Proposed new high density residential neighborhood north of Roosevelt Road and east of the Chicago River

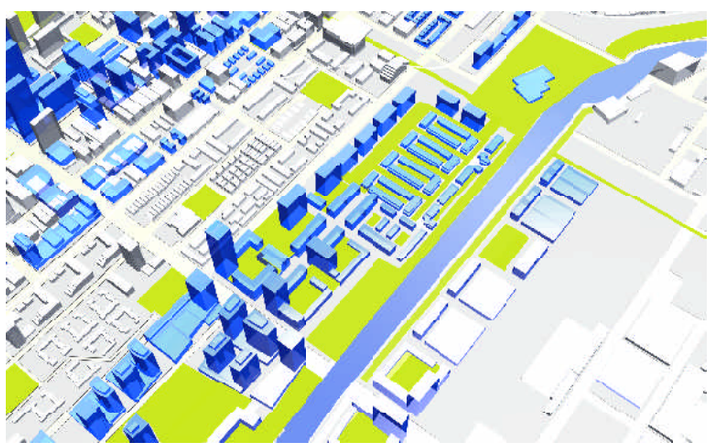


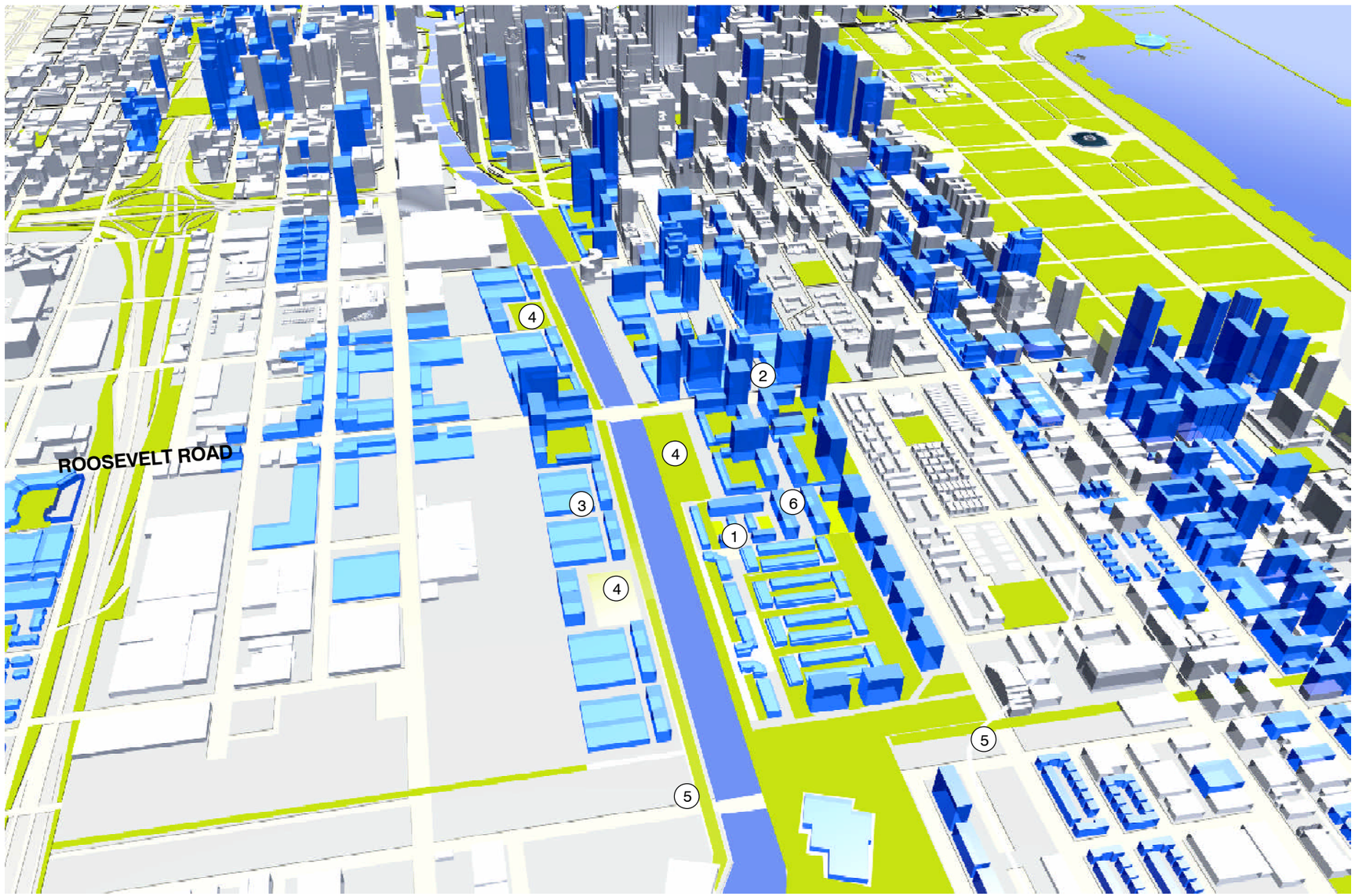
Figure 5.25
Proposed new residential neighborhood south of Roosevelt Road along the River

Figure 5.26
The South River Corridor

A new generation of livable neighborhoods and public open spaces will be created in the South River Corridor.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. New South River Corridor neighborhoods east of the River
2. Higher density mixed-use development at Roosevelt Road
3. Potential industrial, distribution or warehousing development west of the Chicago River
4. New system of riverfront open spaces, parks, and riverwalk
5. Re-use the St. Charles Airline as a greenway or transit right of way.
6. Extend Wentworth Street north to join Wells Street.



The New South River Neighborhoods

In a dramatic reversal of its history as derelict rail yards, the river's edge south of Congress Parkway will become a grand "river promenade". It will draw people to the river and complete a missing link in the riverwalk between Congress Parkway and Ping Tom Park. The street grid will be extended in the South Loop and Near South, creating links to new neighborhoods from the downtown.

A connection along the Wells Street and Wentworth Avenue rights-of-way will function as a neighborhood connector, with Wentworth extended to the north to meet Wells Street at a point south of Roosevelt Road.

New bridges over the Chicago River at Taylor, Polk and/or 16th Streets will improve east-west access and circulation. The St. Charles Airline will be converted to a greenway with bike and walking trails that link the river and neighborhoods further west to the lakefront.

New residential neighborhoods will emerge both north and south of Roosevelt Road that are a 5 to 10 minute walk to the Central Area and are served by Roosevelt Road transit and retail. A variety of residential densities will be encouraged, with higher densities where the corridor intersects with Roosevelt Road. The massing and scale of river edge development to the south of Roosevelt road will be lower to avoid creating a canyon effect.

Neighborhoods and Special Places

East of the Michigan – Wabash –State corridor are the emerging neighborhoods of Central Station and Prairie Avenue.

The *Prairie Avenue Historic District and Museums* will continue to be cultural destinations and to serve as an anchor for a revitalized residential neighborhood. Lower building heights along Prairie Avenue, 18th Street and Cullerton Street will reinforce the scale of the residential neighborhood. To preserve the character of the historic district, density surrounding the historic district will be lower, with higher density development along the development corridors.

West of the Michigan – Wabash – State Corridor the renovation and redevelopment of new mixed-income communities will be completed at the *Hilliard and Ickes Homes* at Cermak Road and State Street in the south of the district. This redevelopment will complement the new Chicago Teacher's Academy.

Chinatown will continue to thrive as a distinctive residential community and a long-standing visitor destination. The neighborhood's development community will create new housing, including single-family homes, townhomes and senior housing. The revamped Cermak Road Corridor will encourage more conventioneers and visitors to travel from McCormick Place to Chinatown.

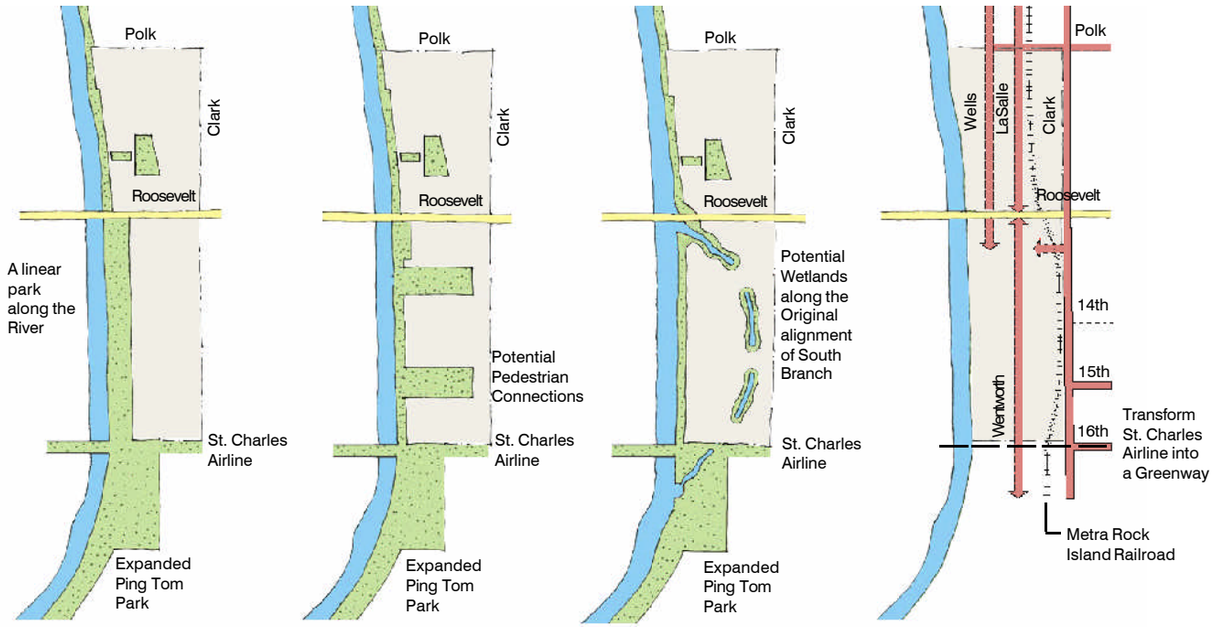


Figure 5.27

These three illustrations indicate some of the open space factors to consider as part of the redevelopment of riverfront properties into new residential communities. The foundation for all these open space ideas is continuous river-edge open space connecting to larger public open spaces and, ultimately, to an expanded Ping Tom Park. Options under consideration in these illustrations are:

- Strategy 1: Create a significant open space setback from the river's edge that will offer continuous public access.
- Strategy 2: Develop open spaces extending east from the river that link the neighborhood to the riverfront.
- Strategy 3: Reflect the site's history and incorporate the natural bend in the river as an open space feature.

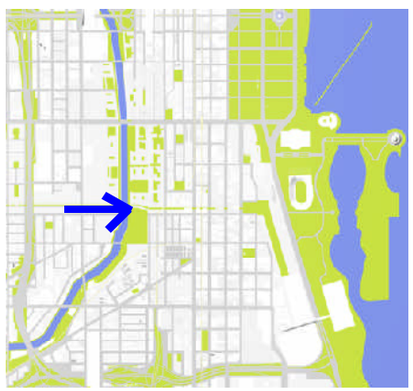


Figure 5.28
Location and direction of views.

Figure 5.29
St. Charles Airline today

Figure 5.30
The St. Charles Airline in 2020 will be a landscaped pedestrian and bike way connecting the South River neighborhoods to the Lakefront.

West of the Chicago River, back-office, light industrial, and distribution uses will remain in the blocks north and south of Roosevelt Road. Reliant on highway access and good circulation on local roadways, these businesses will continue to be compatible neighbors to new retailers.

The Near South includes the eastern corner of the *Pilsen Industrial Corridor* and neighborhood, south of 16th Street between Halsted and the Chicago River. This is primarily an industrial area, and along with the adjoining larger Pilsen Industrial Corridor provides important distribution, service and back office support to the Central Area. Connections between the residential portions of Pilsen, which provide affordable family housing and distinctive neighborhood restaurants and retail, and other parts of the Near South and the Lakefront will be enhanced with the redevelopment of the St. Charles Airline. See below, "Adjoining areas", for further discussion of the Pilsen neighborhood.

Transportation Recommendations

Existing transportation facilities will be upgraded, and new facilities will be developed to respond to the growing residential base and retail activities in the South Loop and Near South Side.

- Extended east-west and north-south streets on the current grid pattern will provide connections and circulation to and through the area.
- The extension of Wells Street south of Roosevelt Road to Wentworth Avenue (which will be extended north from Cermak Road) will connect the emerging neighborhoods along the east bank of the Chicago River's South Branch.
- New bridges over the Chicago River at Polk, Taylor and/or 16th Streets will increase east-west connections
- Key pedestrian streets including State, Michigan, Wabash, Polk, Harrison and 18th Streets will be improved.
- With construction of the Circle Line, a new intermodal station will be created connecting the CTA red and orange lines with Metra's southwest line.
- A new green line station near Cermak Road will improve access to McCormick Place, Chinatown and Motor Row.

Open Space Recommendations

The development of new open spaces and the expansion of existing parks will provide a comprehensive system of open space amenities for local residents, employees, and tourists. Various types of open spaces will be developed, from parks and plazas to green streets and riverwalks. Connections to nearby open space amenities such as Grant Park and the Lakefront will be improved.

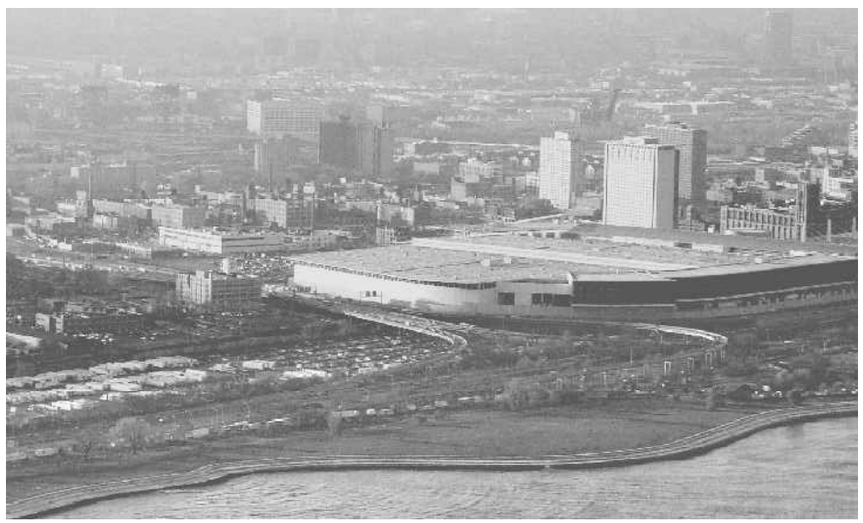
- The improvement of the Chicago River corridor will provide greater pedestrian access to open spaces and communities along the river.
- River setbacks will vary to create a variety of interesting public and open spaces.
- Larger open spaces will be focused where the Chicago River meets major streets, at Congress Parkway, Roosevelt Road and 18th Street.
- More tranquil, natural spaces can be created with the introduction of wetlands in the former bed of the Chicago River.
- Ping Tom Park will expand to include a soccer field, ball fields, and a fieldhouse, as well as a possible boat launch under the 18th Street Bridge. These new recreational facilities will serve local residents, and the expanded park will be a crucial element in the riverfront open space system.
- Improved access to the lakefront will be facilitated by a new connection over Lakeshore Drive at 18th Street.
- The St. Charles Airline will be redeveloped as a greenway, giving pedestrians and cyclists access from the river directly to the lakefront.
- Improvements to Grant Park will include:
    - An increase in amenities such as playgrounds to serve young families.
    - A deck over the Metra tracks at 9th Street will provide a location for athletic fields.
- New neighborhood parks will be developed at Federal and 24th Street, Central Station and Franklin Point.
- A new Campus Park on State Street near Congress will serve educational institutions.
- A new three-acre park in the LaSalle Park Planned Development at Wells and Taylor Streets will anchor new developments nearby.
- A system of landscaped pedestrian ways will be created to provide access to the new parks
- A comprehensive streetscaping system will be implemented.
- Landscaping along the Stevenson and Dan Ryan Expressways will soften their edges and provide green gateways to the Central Area.

Adjoining Areas

Pilsen will continue its long tradition as a place for affordable family housing, bungalows, two and three flats, distinctive local stores and restaurants, neighborhood schools and parks. Careful rehabilitation and infill with new family housing for local residents by local non-profit developers will continue.

The *Pilsen Industrial Corridor* will continue to provide manufacturing and distribution jobs to local residents and to service downtown businesses, the convention industry and the Central Area entertainment and restaurant sector.

The University Village neighborhood surrounding the University of Illinois will expand, with new retail and residential development adjacent to the University campus.



CHAPTER 6

Implementation

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Overview

Public investment decisions made today will affect Chicago's prosperity for decades to come

The Central Area's growth over the past 20 years did not occur spontaneously. Rather, it was the result of sound planning, aggressive economic development efforts, and infrastructure investment on the part of both the public and private sectors. Some of these efforts date back generations - the Loop elevated was built in 1897, the Burnham plan appeared in 1909, and most of the present commuter rail system was in place by the 1920's. Decisions made now will have equally far-reaching impact. Though the time horizon contemplated by this Plan is 2020, it is no exaggeration to say that the groundwork laid today will be the basis of the city's well-being a century hence.

The base and opportunity demand forecasts presented in this Plan reflect the level of investment Chicago is willing to make in its future. If the city makes minimal improvements, no doubt it will continue to grow, but not at the rate that it might have. If the city implements all of the recommendations of this Plan, it will capture a larger share of regional and national growth. The economic impacts to the City of Chicago, the Region and the State of Illinois for both the base and opportunity growth forecasts are significant. The potential impacts over the next 20 years include (stated in 2002 dollars):

Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Economic Benefits **$534 to 755 billion**
Includes: Operations, Indirect, and Construction Output and Earnings, Increased Property Values

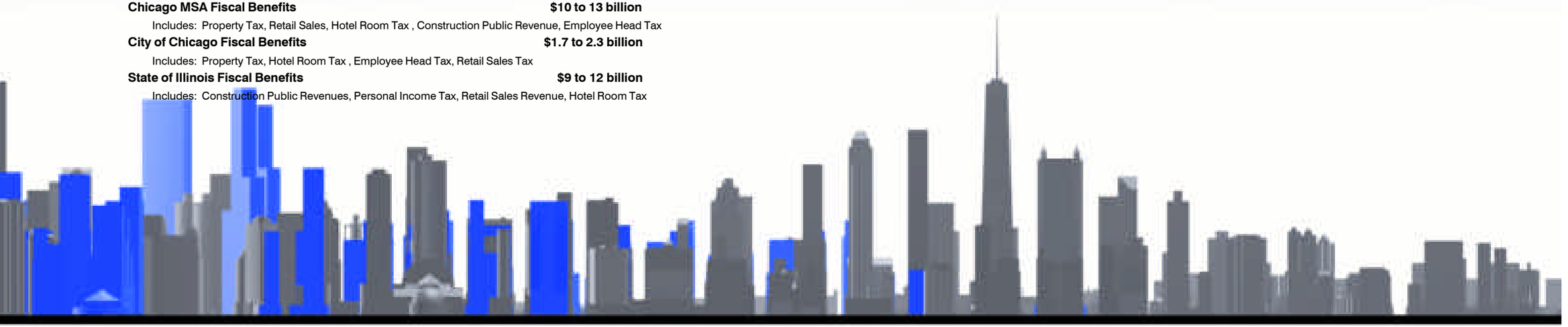
Chicago MSA Fiscal Benefits **$10 to 13 billion**
Includes: Property Tax, Retail Sales, Hotel Room Tax , Construction Public Revenue, Employee Head Tax

City of Chicago Fiscal Benefits **$1.7 to 2.3 billion**
Includes: Property Tax, Hotel Room Tax , Employee Head Tax, Retail Sales Tax

State of Illinois Fiscal Benefits **$9 to 12 billion**
Includes: Construction Public Revenues, Personal Income Tax, Retail Sales Revenue, Hotel Room Tax

It is important to understand the degree to which the components of this Plan are interrelated and depend on one another for their success. There is little point in upzoning the West Loop if workers do not have an efficient way to get to their jobs. Downtown residential neighborhoods will not continue to thrive if viable commercial corridors are not established providing convenient access to goods and services. If the city does not provide its workers, residents, and visitors with the beauty and amenity that greenery and open space afford, they will go someplace that does.

This document lays out an ambitious twenty-year program for Chicago's Central Area. An equally ambitious implementation strategy will be required to bring it to fruition. The scale of needed investment is formidable. Implementation must be carefully phased, with public projects coming online in coordination with the private investment they support. The timing must take into account the long lead times required by government capital funding cycles. As the rebuilding of Wacker Drive demonstrated, these often require a five-year span from initial commitment of funds through project completion.



Implementation Tools

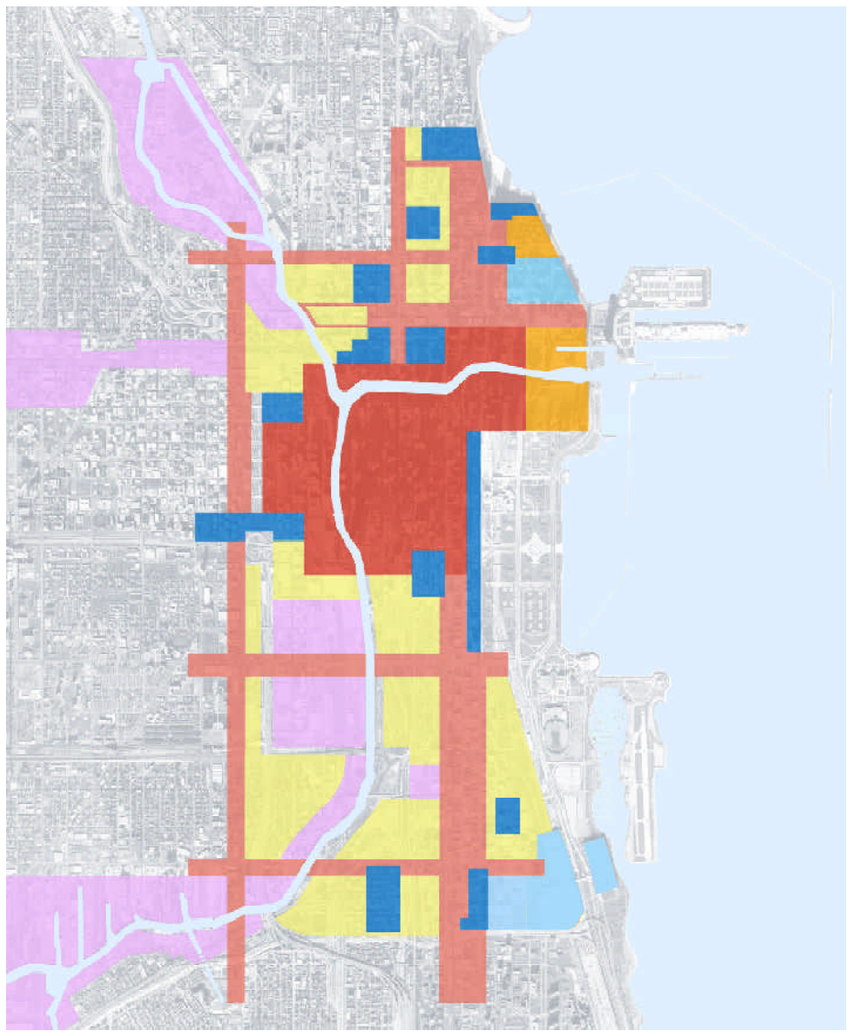


Figure 6.2
Conceptual Framework for Zoning in the Central Area

- The Expanded Loop
- High Density Corridors
- High Density Residential
- Residential
- Industrial Districts and Corridors
- Landmark Districts and Character Areas
- Special Areas - Northwestern Hospital and McCormick Place

The City's zoning ordinance is its key regulatory tool, and is used to direct the size, character, use, and location of development throughout the city. Chicago is currently rewriting its zoning ordinance. A new set of zoning classifications is being designed specifically to address needs within the Central Area planning district.

The public infrastructure improvements proposed in the plan will require substantial and sustained capital investment by the public sector. Traditional sources of revenue will continue to be employed, including federal and state grants, property and sales taxes, and use of the City's bonding authority. But given the massive scale of the proposed capital investment, new sources of revenue must be identified.

Each of these tools will come into play in varying degree for each of the proposed initiatives. Zoning will play a greater role in implementing some aspects of the Plan, while the availability of capital will be more crucial for others. The mix of tools for implementing each of the plan's guiding themes is detailed in the following pages.

Development Controls

Zoning will direct and shape development

Key Recommendations

- Ensure sustained employment growth by providing an adequate land supply for high-density office within walking distance of the existing office core and around enhanced transit facilities.
- The major location for the highest density development should be the Central and West Loop. Secondary locations for high and mid-density development are specific mixed-use corridors.
- Protect and enhance the character of historic areas, special character districts and residential neighborhoods.
- Preserve sufficient industrial land for essential warehousing, distribution and other services to support downtown businesses.
- Enhance the Central Area as an attractive place for people to walk, bicycle, work, live and play by requiring standards for appropriate scale and character, orientation of buildings to streets, appropriate vehicular access, pedestrian-oriented ground floors, well-articulated and transparent facades, landscaping, and by implementing Chicago's Streetscape Guidelines.

Zoning regulation will be the most important factor in directing the type and location of development downtown. The existing ordinance doesn't recognize downtown as a distinctive place, nor does it facilitate development at appropriate locations, consistent with the ideas in this Central Area Plan. The comprehensive rewrite of the zoning ordinance currently underway will create activity districts, development controls and design standards specific to the downtown.

The current zoning district framework divides downtown into four Central Business Districts and three Commercial Districts that represent little more than high-density versions of the neighborhood districts. The revised zoning framework for the Central Area should promote high-intensity, vertically mixed-use districts. In addition to accommodating a full range of uses that contribute to the area's vibrancy, the ordinance should establish standards to implement Central Area plans and policies and achieve economic and development goals. The following four classifications are proposed for the Central Area:

Downtown Core (DC)

A Downtown Core classification would reflect the expanded loop identified in the plan. Uses should be oriented to commercial and office development and provide for the highest density permitted in the city of Chicago. The West Loop and selected other areas intended for incorporation into the office core should be designated DC.

Downtown Mixed-Use (DX)

A Downtown Mixed Use district would reflect the corridors of vertically-stacked mixed uses radiating from the office core. Within them, a rich mix of complementary uses would be encouraged, including hotels, meeting and convention facilities, retailing, residential, and cultural and entertainment uses. In general, permissible density would be high (although less so than in DC districts), graduating down where the DX district adjoined a lower-density residential district.

Downtown Residential (DR)

A Downtown Residential District would reflect the higher density residential neighborhoods within the Central Area. Permissible density would vary depending on the predominant housing type envisioned for a particular district.

Downtown Service (DS)

The industrial and commercial services areas in the Central Area should be designated "downtown service" zones. The DS classification would ensure the survival of support and back-office functions that are crucial to the health of downtown businesses.

Historic Preservation will be a major priority

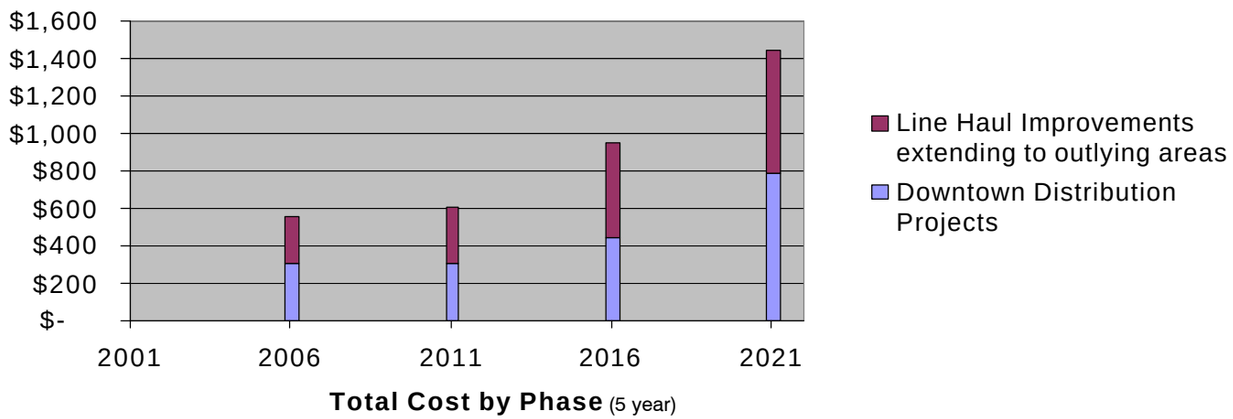
Chicago's world-renowned architectural heritage contributes immeasurably to the Central Area's character and quality of life. The City will continue to be proactive in protecting and designating landmarks, creating incentives for preservation, and educating owners about the benefits of preserving historic buildings.

Key Recommendations

- Protect the currently designated landmark buildings and districts in the Central Area.
- Continue to designate the Central Area's most important landmark buildings and districts.
- Protect significant buildings and districts that have been identified on the City's historic resources survey, are under study as potential landmarks, or are on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Expand incentives to motivate owners to preserve and maintain historic buildings.
- Educate building owners about the benefits of preservation.

Table 6.1
Central Area Transportation Projects
Estimated Capital Cost by End Date (in $Ms)

The total cost of transportation improvements over 20 years will be between $2.25 and $3.5 billion in capital investment. This is in addition to the $7 billion needed for regional improvements to meet current demand for service.



Total Cost by Phase (5 year)

Transportation

New transportation facilities will require new sources of revenue

The transportation plan for the Central Area requires major new systems and facilities to support growth. While zoning can help to promote an accessible Central Area, these new systems will require major new sources of capital funds.

Need vs. Available Funding

Table 4.1 provides order-of-magnitude costs for the transportation projects proposed in this Plan, broken out by phase. Note that costs are "back-loaded" - the largest expenses occur in later years, reflecting a desire to link capital expenditures to increases in the tax base. The phasing also takes into consideration the long lead times needed to fund and build major facilities such as the West Loop Transportation Center.

Transportation is not the only infrastructure need requiring public funding. Additional investment in police and fire facilities, water distribution, street and sidewalk reconstruction, etc., will also be required. However, increased tax receipts from existing sources due to tax base growth are expected to be sufficient to cover such costs. That is not the case for transportation.

The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) estimate that $7 billion will be needed region-wide between 2003 and 2020 to meet the current level of demand. In addition to this $7 billion, the base scenario for Central Area growth would require about $2.25 billion in additional transportation capital investment. The opportunity scenario would require and additional $3.25 billion.

Current sources of funds fall far short of these needs. Transportation planners estimate that only $5 billion in funds from various sources will be available to contribute to the $7 billion needed to meet current demand in the region, creating a funding gap of $2 billion even before factoring in the additional demand generated by growth. With Central Area growth factored in, the projected gap is 4.6 billion. To reduce this $4-6 billion funding gap, three steps are important:

- Reauthorize existing federal and state funding programs
- Explore new Central Area funding sources
- Refine priorities

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Federal and State Funding Programs

Like all U.S. cities, Chicago relies on state and federal sources for the majority of its transportation funds. In 2001, the Regional Transportation Authority received 56% of its capital funds from the federal government, while 36% came from the State of Illinois. At the federal level, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) has been a significant source of funds, providing 80% of capital costs against a 20% local match. This program will expire in 2003. Within the state, Illinois FIRST and the Illinois Series "B" bond program have been the major funding sources. Both programs are designed, in part, to satisfy the local matching requirement. Illinois FIRST is due to expire in 2004. The Series "B" program is subject to annual appropriation by the Illinois General Assembly.

Reauthorization of these programs is an important first step. The capital need forecast for transportation in the Central Area is many times what has been funded in the past. The City and its representatives in Congress and the General Assembly must persuade the federal and state governments that increasing funding for existing programs and creating new programs for the 21st century is key for the survival of Chicago and all of America's cities and for the American economy to remain competitive globally.

Local Central Area Funding Sources

Sources in this category include Tax-Increment Financing (TIF), Special Service Areas (SSAs). An additional funding source could be realized by capturing a percentage of the property taxes generated by new office growth.

The Central Loop TIF District is the largest and most successful of Chicago's 120 TIF districts. It has generated over $300 million for investment since 1990. It has been used for major transportation projects downtown, ranging from the Randolph/Washington subway station renovation to bridge improvements on Lower Wacker Drive. However, this TIF is unlikely to be a major source for funding new projects. The program is due to expire in 2007, and most of the remaining increment has been committed. The district has also largely succeeded in eliminating blight within its boundaries, leaving little possibility of establishing a new district.

Fourteen other TIF districts exist within the boundaries of the Central Area. Of these, four - Chicago/Kingsbury, River West, Near South, and Canal/Congress - are structured to permit funding of transportation. But the amount of increment generated within these districts is limited, so they would not be major sources of revenue.

Special Service Areas (SSAs) are a second possible local mechanism. These special taxing authorities are approved by local property holders who agree to a maximum additional tax levy of 0.175% of their equalized assessed valuation (EAV) to support special projects. The potential revenue from this source was estimated for the existing commercial and industrial properties in the Central Area. At a base property tax rate of 9.252%, this source could generate as much as $155 million in bond proceeds over 20 years. If the permissible tax levy were raised to, for example, 0.8%, the resultant revenues could reach $675 million under the growth scenario.

Several policy issues arise with regard to the use of SSAs. Would funds generated by an SSA be usable strictly for transportation or could they be used for other programs? Should an SSA include residential property? How do we ensure that special levy will not affect competitiveness of the Central Area office market? All of these factors will need to be carefully weighed before an SSA can be introduced.

Office property taxes are other potential sources of funds for Central Area transportation enhancements. The City could direct a portion of the taxes generated by new office development to a downtown transportation enterprise fund. Similar in concept to a TIF, this would require no net increase in taxes, merely the redirection of property tax increment to a specific geographic area and a specific use. If 5% of new office property taxes were segregated in this way, the fund could generate up to $19 million in bond proceeds over 20 years. Segregating 30% of office property taxes would provide up to $115 million.

Open Space

Creating new open space will also require new revenue sources

The high cost and relative scarcity of land will continue to present a barrier to large-scale development of open space in the Central Area. The City must explore new ways of acquiring and developing open space. A combination of approaches will be employed:

- Use publicly owned land creatively
- Increase the open space impact fee in the Central Area
- Negotiate new park land in planned developments
- Capitalize on the 30-foot river setback

Publicly Owned Land

Through its campus parks program, the City seeks to develop open space adjacent to public facilities such as schools and libraries. This puts open space where younger users congregate. It also makes the most of publicly owned land, reducing capital and operating costs. Within the Central Area, campus parks are planned for a new school: the Lake Shore East development along the river east of Michigan Avenue.

The City must also look for park sites in unorthodox locations, and create land where it currently doesn't exist. Such out-of-the-way spots include land beneath the elevated Green Line tracks and air rights over the expressways. New open space could be created in the West Loop by decking over a portion of the expressway without ramps just north and south of Monroe Street. This new open space would help to break down existing barriers while helping to meet demand for park land.

Open Space Impact Fee

Under the zoning ordinance, new residential development must contribute to the creation of open space and recreational facilities required to serve new residents, either through direct land donations or cash contributions to a dedicated fund. The requirement applies to all new residential development and rehabilitation that creates additional dwelling units. Replacement housing which does not increase the existing number of dwelling units is exempt from the fee.

The formula currently used to calculate the open space impact fee is based on city-wide land values. In the Central Area, land acquisition costs are much higher. A reasonable approach would be to modify the formula for downtown projects to reflect the higher cost of obtaining downtown land.

Open Space in Planned Developments

The City negotiates improvements for larger developments downtown through the planned development process. An important element of this process is the provision of open space, particularly for projects involving residential use. The planned development process has resulted in a number of significant additions to the Central Area's open space inventory, and will continue to be an important tool.

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Environmental Commitment

Green initiatives will enhance Central Area energy efficiency and improve environmental quality during the coming era of growth

Promoting public transit and advancing open space and landscaping are important tools for environmental health. In addition, Chicago's approach to ensuring environmental quality is three-pronged: it seeks to reduce the level of noxious emissions, restore areas that have suffered past degradation, and ensure reliable production and distribution of electric power through management of the Commonwealth Edison franchise. Within the Central Area, the Chicago Department of Environment (DOE) is advancing several initiatives to achieve those ends.

Controlling Emissions - Air Quality

In an urban area, changes in land cover alter local climate and air quality, in part by elevating the emission of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx), two of the key ozone precursors. Especially during the summer, dark colored pavements, rooftops and other surfaces absorb, trap and radiate heat. These dark surfaces make up approximately 48% of Chicago's landscape. More than 60% of Chicago's rooftops are dark.

The result is an "urban heat island" with temperatures averaging 6 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit higher than rural temperatures. This increase not only results in higher energy use for cooling buildings, but also causes pollution-creating ground level ozone.

Chicago's Urban Heat Island Initiative is designed to ameliorate the effects of dark surfaces and reduce pollution by: (1) using alternative paving, (2) constructing light-colored roofs, (3) using alternative energy sources, (4) increasing green space, and (5) installing rooftop gardens. DOE is not only encouraging business and homeowners to use these techniques but also is implementing them itself. One example is the rooftop garden on City Hall. In addition, Chicago will pursue Cities for Clean Air Partnership goals to cut emission of greenhouse gases, and safeguard human health as well as local fauna and habitats.

Managing the Energy Supply

Distributed Generation: Distributed generation, the use of small-scale power generation technologies located on-site or close to the demand being served, is an important tool for energy efficiency. Energy users and suppliers can thereby reduce their reliance on the electric grid, increasing energy security, reliability, efficiency and cost and reducing overall emissions.

The Chicago Industrial Energy Plan Project has established a government and industry cooperative to identify strategic industrial locations that will maximize the benefit of integrated industrial distributed generation.

The project is guided by a Steering Committee consisting of industry leaders, local electric and gas utilities, city and state officials, engineering companies, equipment manufacturers and energy project developers.

Cogeneration: Cogeneration is a highly efficient means of generating heat and electric power at the same time from the same energy source. Displacing fossil fuel combustion with heat that would normally be wasted in the process of power generation, it reaches efficiencies that triple or even quadruple conventional power generation. Cogeneration is cost-effective and has been in use since the 19th century. It accounts for well over half of new power plant capacity in North America in the last decade. In northern Europe and increasingly in North America, cogeneration is at the heart of district heating and cooling systems.

Chicago's Trigen/Peoples District Energy Center at McCormick Place is an example of a cogeneration user. Instead of using separate energy-consuming processes for producing steam and electricity, the company produces both at once. A machine that burns natural gas can run a turbine to produce electricity, while the waste heat can be used to make steam.

DOE promotes cogeneration facilities that distribute steam and electricity to other facilities through district heating and cooling programs. A central distribution center would cogenerate steam and electricity, then distribute steam for heat and use the electricity to chill water, which would be piped out to cool buildings.

District Heating and Cooling: District heating and cooling is an environmentally sound technology for providing heating and possibly other forms of energy from a central plant to multiple users.

Chicago's district cooling system is run by Exelon Thermal. It uses five centrally located plants to produce chilled water and then distributes the water through pipes to cool nearby buildings:

- South State Street and East Adams Street
- South Franklin Street and West Congress Parkway (main plant)
- East Randolph Street and North Columbus Drive
- Merchandise Mart Building
- 100-150 South Wacker Drive

Additional facilities are planned.

District energy can save money for users, conserve resources, reduce pollution, and open up options for flexible and sustainable energy solutions in the future. District energy has a number of advantages over energy systems that serve only one user:

- Central plants are more efficient than multiple small plants, so energy consumption is reduced and operation and maintenance costs are lowered.
- Central plants have almost zero emissions whereas traditional electric generation is one of the most significant sources of pollution in Chicago.
- District energy removes combustion equipment from buildings, saving space in the buildings, and removing a source of indoor air quality contamination.
- District energy systems can be flexible-fueled, which means they can burn whatever fuel is most economical and/or environmentally sound at the time.
- District energy systems present an opportunity for cogeneration.

DOE is working to establish cogeneration district heating and cooling sites city wide.

In addition to these tools, Chicago's Energy Management Plan calls for the City to:

- Promote renewable energy
- Install solar panels on public buildings and encourage private owners to do the same.
- Promote rehabilitation of public and private buildings to make them more energy efficient.
- Encourage energy efficiency in residential development through the "green homes" initiative.
- Use energy efficient light bulbs in street lights and traffic signals.

Green Design

Chicago is adopting the nationally recognized "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" (LEED) Green Building Rating System and will examine opportunities to create incentives to promote construction and rehabilitation that meets LEED standards. These standards promote construction that will:

- Reduce the impacts of natural resource consumption.
- Create healthy indoor environments.
- Safeguard water and water efficiency.
- Be energy efficient and use renewable energy.

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Task Force Summaries

Introduction

In June 2000, the Department of Planning and Development began a bold plan for Chicago's Central Area. The planning process has been guided by a Steering Committee comprised of leaders from the business, government, and civic sectors. A key role of the Steering Committee is to review vision, policy, and project recommendations that emerged from Task Forces organized around seven key areas:

- **Office**
- **Residential**
- **Retail**
- **Tourism**
- **Culture and Education**
- **Transportation**
- **Urban Design**

The task forces included over 120 experts and opinion leaders who are well versed in the state of downtown development.

This chapter presents the task forces' assessments of the key challenges and opportunities facing the Central Area.

Recommendations Emerging Across Task Forces

The Civic Realm

- Expand the Central Area's Open Space system to include the Chicago River Corridor and new plazas, lakefront and neighborhood parks, and high-quality streetscapes.
- Develop the Chicago River Corridor as a shared amenity with public access, promenades, parks, and high-quality mixed-use buildings.
- Stimulate innovative design to reaffirm Chicago's reputation as a leader in great urban architecture.
- Support the growth and vibrancy of cultural and educational institutions to enrich life downtown.
- Add new public schools in response to actual demand. Education can be provided through innovative programming within existing cultural institutions and adaptive reuse of downtown buildings.
- Federal, state, and county funding should be focused on improving the urban environment, transit, leisure and convention tourism, and education in Chicago.

Land Use and Districts

- Preserve and strengthen the distinctive character of unique buildings and districts, including historic buildings and districts.
- Extend the office core into the West Loop to better utilize the existing infrastructure, major commuter rail stations, highway access and availability of development parcels.
- Direct and strengthen residential neighborhoods around the core office district.
- Emphasize office development within the West Loop, limiting residential development.
- Develop clear land use priorities for the development of large land parcels and rail yards
- Emphasize public access to the Chicago River, particularly in the Southwest Loop.
- Create a focused retail strategy for commercial streets that targets places for neighborhood, downtown, and contemporary retail.
- Preserve industrial development within Planned Manufacturing Districts and designated industrial corridors.
- Support transit-oriented development within neighborhoods and business districts.

Transportation and Access

- Improve downtown-to-airport connections.
- Improve east - west connections in the Central Area south of Congress Parkway.
- Reconnect the north and south districts of the Central Area across Congress Parkway.
- Relate density of development to availability of transit.
- Support convenient public transit to and within the Central Area.
- Improve way-finding and connections between regional rail, rapid transit and bus systems, and available parking.
- Improve signage and programs to help residents and visitors navigate downtown.

Office Task Force

Chicago's downtown office district has many attributes that point to a strong future

- Its prominence as a share of the total metropolitan office inventory
- The large and growing residential presence in the Central Area
- The existence of other complimentary land uses including hotels, convention facilities, retail, cultural institutions, and institutions of higher education
- A good public transit and system

It faces challenges, at the same time, including:

- A significant part of downtown Chicago's employment base is tied to the exchanges, institutions with an uncertain future
- Due to cumbersome and unpredictable zoning and building permit processes, costs associated with construction exceed those in the suburbs
- The cost of doing business in Chicago exceeds that of the suburbs because of higher taxes and labor rates, while certain services are inferior, particularly power

Conclusions

- Parts of the downtown make sense for development of high-density office, given proximity to regional transportation hubs, other high-density office, and locational magnets like the courts and other government buildings.
- The West Loop, from Randolph on the north, Van Buren on the south, east to the River and west to the Expressway, is a logical location for office growth.
- Parts of the downtown are less appropriate for high-density office development as it can strain infrastructure and put pressure on other land uses that are important.
- Eliminate impediments to the downtown's competitiveness as an office location:
  - streamline the building permit process
  - provide telecommunications infrastructure coordination through projects like Civicnet
  - continue efforts to upgrade the Chicago public schools
  - improve public transit to the airports and circulation around the Central Area
  - encourage the provision of high-quality electricity in sufficient quantity to meet future demand.
- Encourage infrastructure investments in the Central Area, particularly mass transit improvements, that will allow the Central Area office market to capture 50% of regional demand for new space.

Residential Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

- Develop downtown neighborhoods as safe and healthy places to live, with sufficient light within dwelling units, parks and green space, and attractive streetscapes.
- Provide a broad range of housing options in the downtown market for young workers, students, empty nesters, families, and the elderly.
- Promote affordable housing through the redevelopment of public housing, City of Chicago affordable housing programs and creative uses of TIF funds.
- Provide 100% accessible public infrastructure.
- Encourage mixed uses that support 24-hour, viable urban districts where appropriate.
- Direct high-density residential development near high-capacity streets and transportation facilities.
- Outside the core office district, develop the Chicago River as a vibrant, predominantly residential, mixed-use spine with continuous access to waterways, parks and plazas, and restaurants.
- Create a rich pedestrian experience, mixing historic character with new architecture in residential areas.
- Preserve significant historic buildings for a variety of neighborhood uses.
- Concentrate convenient retail development along targeted streets and intersections to meet residents' daily needs.
- Support market-driven demand as it develops.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- Determine the appropriate density, mix and location of new residential development.
- Develop clear zoning regulations to achieve the City's vision.
- Develop housing over the railyards on the west side of the river, south of Congress.
- Explore intermodal transportation in the Central Area (NEV).
- Encourage residential uses in character districts that are already low-rise.
- Organize auto and truck access during rush hours.
- Provide parking to meet real needs and include parking area in FAR requirements.
- Avoid overly dense development resulting from too much use of zoning bonuses on a single block.
- Provide tax credits and development transfer rights to landmarks and property improvements that benefit the public.
- Focus family residential development on the outer edges of the Central Area, where land is more affordable and available.
- Locate retail within targeted areas rather than requiring it in all new development.
- Explore the establishment of a "light manufacturing zone" for industry that would be compatible with residential development.

Residential Task Force (continued)

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Build housing over the railroad tracks on the west side of the river.
- Re-design downtown public schools: offer after school programs, encourage "schools without walls" concept by offering classes at cultural institutions and other sites.
- Encourage downtown residents to use New Urban Vehicles, including electric or more compact cars.

Retail Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

- The increasing aggregate buying power in the Central Area is increasing the demand for retail. The demand comes from a growing number of office workers, visitors, and residents.
- Retail needs a safe and secure environment. It needs to be accessible by foot, car, and public transit.
- A model is needed to determine how retailers' physical requirements can fit into the urban pattern of Chicago. Attention needs to be paid to traffic, signage, parking, building materials, and physical design.
- Retail can be used to support "places" such as parks, plazas, and the Chicago River Corridor by helping provide a program for such spaces.
- More after-work venues will keep workers and students downtown in the evenings to support local retailers.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- What are priorities for the Central Area Retail Plan?
- What are the planning implications, and economic benefits, of office worker, resident, and visitor markets?
- What opportunities are created, and how can Chicago capitalize on them, for the expansion and diversification of the city's retail economic base by virtue of the transformations occurring to the South and West Loop districts ? These include the emergence of new residential communities; the potential availability of land formerly used for warehousing, manufacturing, and railroad-related operations; and development investments being made to McCormick Place, the Lakeside Press properties, Chinatown, Bronzeville, University of Illinois, et al.
- Are there any appropriate places for larger "big box" retailers in the expanded Central Area? If so, what guidelines should there be for siting, building design, parking, and delivery access?
- What type of retail development , if any, should be encouraged and discouraged along the Ohio-Ontario corridor?
- Given the proliferation of hotels in the peripheral locations along the river, in Streeterville, and Illinois Center, should future hotels be encouraged closer to existing office and retail concentrations to maximize economic synergy and business visitor convenience?
- Is street congestion having a negative effect on the quality of retail experience for certain market segments?
- Should the City require ground-level retail in all new office buildings or just along targeted streets?
- What kinds of retail are needed in the Theater District?
- Should Block 37 incorporate significant "arrival" space and amenities for transit users?

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Create a Blues/Arts/Incubator Museum District in Motor Row along South Michigan Avenue near McCormick Place that begins to bridge Bronzeville with McCormick Place and the Loop.
- Create after-work experiences tied to transit nodes.
- Include additional visitor experiences along the Chicago River Corridor.
- Create multiple retail nodes that may help reduce traffic congestion and provide services closer to residences, such as in the South Loop area.
- Promote culturally diverse market/fairs for merchandise and food to showcase neighborhood merchants.

Tourism Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

- The future health of Chicago's tourism industry depends on a blend of key components: hotels; attractions/product development; access and circulation; exhibit space; convention/business visitors; family visitors; sustainability; promotion and marketing; and theatres and product development.
- Look to international models for rapid transit. Heathrow to London is fast but costs $25/person.
- Provide "seamless" transportation for visitors, beginning with airport arrival.
- Improve transportation to museums, rail stations, and attractions
- Improve signage at airport and on transit
- Improve motor coach parking, since a full bus yields $33,000 in visitor purchases.

- Connect downtown to the neighborhoods. Visitors from Europe are used to staying in neighborhoods. (This would be easier if transit were seamless.)
- Build on the "huge" opportunity to link international shoppers to the Central Area
- Develop more attractions around McCormick Place.
- Improve cross marketing opportunities with between the City and State.
- Promote the lakefront outside downtown as a major tourist asset.
- Identify alternative locations for tour boats to relieve crowding of the river and locks.
- Develop and promote weekday visitor attractions to extend stays after big shows.
- Publicize events must well over a year in advance in promotional brochures.
- Encourage economic diversity on North Michigan Avenue in case of a downturn in the economy.
- Improve access to and movement around North Michigan Avenue.
- Emphasize the more efficient use of existing sources of funds rather than the creation of new ones.
- Improve first quarter activities to boost occupancy in Central Area hotels by 15%.
- Encourage the City to continue to pursue mega-events.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- Continue to look at third airport opportunities, at Peotone or Gary as, according to a Booz Allen study, O'Hare will run out of capacity in 2018 if the economy continues to grow.
- Determine how to create a $100 million/year fund to build infrastructure.
- Study express trains to Midway and O'Hare with baggage check-in at a downtown location.
- As the West Side is grows, locate family hotels near the train stations.
- Explore new museum concepts, including: transportation; architectural remnant park; maritime; large equipment; high-tech electronics; music using Grammy material stored in New York.
- Look at Passenger Facility Charges to enhance the arrival/departure experience.
- Study the need for a connection between Midway and O'Hare.
- Look at international models to increase tourism, including more multilingual tours and a focus on cultural attractions and natural features.
- Include the tourism industry on decisions involving use of the amusement tax and MPEA dollars.
- Increase the supply of inexpensive long-term remote parking.
- Establish a transportation fund with tourism taxes.
- Determine what entertainment amenities new downtown residents want.
- Determine the best locations for the next 1,000-room hotel. Would it be near McCormick Place?
- Determine the future demand for 1,500 - 2,000- room hotels.
- Assess how to stimulate affordable hotel development and preserve it for families.

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Create a series of islands – possibly as a National Park — to extend the use of the lakefront.
- Redevelop the Franklin Point site as a place for family hotels or an amusement park.
- Make the Chicago Auto Show the product introduction event for national and international automakers to show Chicago to the world.
- Stage events like London's Chelsea Garden Show in Millennium Park.
- Develop a system of kiosks providing up-to-the-minute visitor information.

Culture and Education Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Downtown institutions can play a stronger role to familiarize children and teens with the resources of the Central Area to make the downtown a tool for urban learning.
- Partnerships with corporations and institutions can strengthen and broaden programs for learning.
- The growing demand for local schools can be met through the adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- Support the health and presence of central area educational institutions.
- Encourage downtown institutions to develop programs for life-long learning for all Chicago residents.
- Encourage more efficient use of land through shared and mixed-use facilities.
- Encourage educational institutions and their buildings to reflect and relate to the urban fabric.
- Create a committee of government, businesses, and schools as a communications device to develop new programs. Foster links between government, businesses and schools so Chicago stays "ahead of the curve" in higher education.
- Foster links between businesses and cultural and educational institutions to increase availability of resources to businesses.

Culture and Education Task Force (continued)

CULTURE

- Elevate Chicago as a regional cultural center. This can help to change attitudes toward the importance of the city overall for the nine million residents of the metropolitan area.
- Make the health of culture a regional issue with more regional contributions (not just property taxes).
- Cultivate the diversity of content and scale of cultural attractions.
- Make art and culture elements a component of mixed-use nodes in the South and South West Loop.
- Locate new museums and cultural places strategically to encourage developing areas.

POP CULTURE

- Encourage new entertainment destinations for central area residents, including the clustering of music clubs and galleries.

THEATER

- Find ways to showcase non-Loop Chicago theaters in appropriately scaled venues.

LIBRARIES

- Create new, smaller libraries using the Chicago Public Library Express model.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- How does the City showcase Chicago artists in infrastructure projects?
- How do we define and expand the importance of public art?
- What is the potential impact of the expansion of non-profit ownership of buildings on the local tax base?

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Create a CPS-supported arts high school in the Central Area.
- Develop a shared preparation and construction facility for theaters and performing arts organizations.
- Develop a shared rehearsal space for performing arts organizations.
- Create a digital Technology Center so technology tools are available to local artists.
- Create a museum incubator, perhaps in the Motor Row buildings.
- Develop new museums such as a Museum of the City of Chicago, Musical Heritage Museum, outdoor museum along the Chicago River, or a Chicago Communities Museum.

Transportation Task Force

Transportation and Access Guiding Principles

- Encourage a balanced transportation system, making it convenient for commuters, shoppers, visitors and others to use transit, walking, biking, taxi or private auto.
- Maintain or increase transit's share of trips as downtown grows.
- Make the transportation system more user friendly through better signs, communication, etc.
- Scale new development to be compatible with transportation capacity
- Maximize the utility of the existing transportation system.
- Maintain or upgrade the existing transportation system to a consistent level.

Preliminary Recommendations

- Improve intermodal connections between transit services, especially rail to bus.
- Use new technologies to improve traffic in the downtown.
- Improve transit access between major rail systems and major activity centers.
- When multiple modes serve a land use, give preference to transit first.
- Expand and modernize the transit system to provide better service from outlying areas to and within the Central Area.
- Extend the street grid network into developing areas, including the South Loop.
- Improve the management, capacity and connectivity of the existing roadway system.
- Devise a parking strategy that is consistent with available street capacity and avoids negative impacts on transit and pedestrians.
- Encourage bike use by improving downtown bicycle facilities.
- Improve downtown's "walkability" by fixing inadequate or missing pedestrian connections.
- Extend the pedway system to high-volume transit stations.
- Improve transit connections between downtown and the airports.
- Provide consistent, even-handed, long-range enforcement of traffic and pedestrian regulations.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- Consider zoning solutions to address the spatial mismatch between convention and hotel locations.
- Identify funding sources for transit improvements and expansion.
- Determine appropriate locations and quantity of new parking. In particular, what is the appropriate ratio of parking spaces to dwelling units in new Central Area residential development?
- Define the role of private sector transportation (taxis, water taxis, motorcoaches and motorcoach parking, jitney buses, valet services).
- Develop consistent training and deployment of traffic aides.
- Determine the need for a hierarchy of uses for the Transportation System.

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Continue bridge improvements: Wacker Drive Reconstruction; over the Chicago River at Jackson, Monroe; over the Kennedy at Lake, Van Buren, Jackson, Randolph; over Metra/ ICRR at Monroe.
- Develop a transportation circulator system in the Central Area.
- Develop the South Loop Connector, extending Wells and Wentworth streets from 18th Street to Roosevelt Rd.
- Create new street furniture including bus shelters.
- Develop Traffic Signal Interconnect Systems and a Traffic Management System.
- Promote selective reduction of parking meters to improve traffic flow and lower short term parking rates.
- Emphasize shared loading zones and restrict deliveries in peak hours.
- Site driveways to avoid vehicular conflicts with pedestrians.
- Provide charter bus parking.
- Tighten valet parking regulations.
- Engage building management involvement in managing perimeter traffic
- Improve the taxi system, including driver training, more cab stands, etc.
- Promote the use of clean fuel buses.

Urban Design and Open Space Task Force

Preliminary Recommendations

- Expand the Central Area's renowned system of public spaces – the lakefront, Michigan Avenue, Wacker Drive and State Street – to encompass the Chicago River and a new system of neighborhood parks and open spaces lined by high-quality streetscapes.
- Develop the Chicago River as Chicago's second premier waterfront, with shared public spaces such as promenades, parks and outdoor cafes, and as a quality address for new commercial and residential development.
  Create high-quality entryways and corridors to heighten the experience of arrival into the Central Area.
- Develop ground floors with transparent faces to maximize the visibility of active uses and to improve the quality of the streetscape.
- Re-connect downtown pedestrian and roadway networks by removing and/or relocating barriers presented by railroads.

Areas Needing Further Discussion and Research

- Manage the appropriate mix of residential development to promote livability and to avoid land-use conflicts.
- Focus new residential development on strategic renovation and reuse of historic buildings.
- Create parking strategies and identify new locations for non-accessory parking.
- Plan for the preservation of landmark buildings and special character districts.
- Establish specific design and location requirements for new types of parking-dependent retail.

Innovative Ideas and Projects

- Extend the concept of "civic realm" to include creative new uses for rail corridors and highway infrastructure, such as decking over the expressways.
- Create new open space along railroad rights-of-way.
- Repair multi-level streets such as east Wacker Drive to improve connections.
- Move railroad staging yards out of the Central Area to create new development and open space opportunities.
- Extend the street grid over the Chicago River south of Congress.
- Redevelop the St. Charles Air Line for new transit, green space, and/or recreational uses.

Acknowledgments and List of Illustrations

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List of Illustrations and Sources

Unless noted below, all illustrations and images by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, LLP

Executive Summary

Fig. i The proposed office core expansion into the West Loop will allow 16,000,000 square feet of new office growth. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.

Additional renderings in Executive Summary by SOM and Panto-Ulema.

Chapter 1

Fig. 1.1 South Michigan Avenue today. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 1.2 South Michigan Avenue will be one of many higher intensity, mixed-use corridors that will extend out from the Loop and form the centers of urban neighborhoods. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.

Fig. 1.3 The Central Area of Chicago. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Development and SOM.

Fig. 1.4 The Central Area makes up 2% of the City of Chicago. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Development and SOM.

Fig.1.5 The Central Area in 2020. Rendering by SOM.

Fig.1.6 Chicago Metropolis 2020 - Community Leaders Scenario for Chicago Region 2030. Illustration by Metropolis 2020.

Additional photographs on pg. 6:
"The Plan of Chicago" Photo by Robert Cameron.
"Development Plan for the Central Area of Chicago" Photo by SOM.
"Chicago 21: A Plan for the Central Area Communities" Photo by SOM.
"Chicago Central Area Plan: A Plan for the Heart of the City" Photo by Teng Associates.

Chapter 2

Fig. 2.1 Natural Features ... Lake, River and Land. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 2.2 The Street Grid extending in all directions allows the downtown to be remarkably open and accessible. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 2.3 Typical Block within the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 2.4 The Block Pattern organizes all development. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 2.5 Density and diversity within each block. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 2.6 A tradition of innovative architecture. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.7 Parks and open space. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.8 Great places. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.9 Bascule bridges. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.10 Bascule bridges. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.11 The East Loop and South Loop have seen remarkable changes in recent years. Photo by Panto Ulema.

Fig. 2.12 The Near Northwest offers potential for high density residential neighborhoods and maintained historic industrial areas. Photo by Panto Ulema.

Fig. 2.13 Office Space, Chicago Central Business District, 1950-2020. Illustration by SOM, Arthur Anderson LLP and the Goodman Williams Group.

Fig. 2.14 The Central Area Office Core. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.15 New office buildings are being constructed in the Wacker Drive corridor. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.16 Central Area Residential Development, 1980-2020. Illustration by SOM, Arthur Anderson LLP and the Goodman Williams Group.

Fig. 2.17 Central Station rowhouses. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.18 There was a net increase of 23,000 residential units between 1980 and 2000 in the Central Area. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.19 DePaul University. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.20 The East and South Loop are home to major schools, many of which have renovated older buildings. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.21 River North. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.22 North Michigan Avenue. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.23 State Street. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.24 The recent expansion of McCormick Place has created a new focal point for the area. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.25 The Field Museum is now part of an integrated museum campus and stronger lakefront park system. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.26 Printing and distribution in the Central Area. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.27 Manufacturing on Goose Island. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 2.28 Commonwealth Edison is engaged in a multibillion dollar upgrade of its Chicago power distribution grid, with emphasis on the Central Area. Illustration by SOM and City of Chicago Department of Environment.

Fig. 2.29 Central Area transit today. Illustration by SOM and City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

Fig. 2.30-1 The Central Area is served by CTA rail and bus and Metra commuter rail. Photos by SOM.

Fig. 2.32 Opportunities for Development, 2001-2020. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Development and SOM.

Fig. 2.33 The South Loop and the Near South provide great opportunities for future residential and retail developments as well as continued rail oriented uses. Photo by Panto Ulema.

Table 2.1 Historic and Projected Growth, Chicago Central Area, 1980-2020. Illustration by Arthur Anderson LLP.

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Table 2.2 Total Central Area Employment, 1972-2020. Illustration by Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table 2.3 Central Area Employment by Market Sector, 1972-2020. Illustration by Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table 2.4 Central Area Office Development, 1950-2020. Building Owners and Managers Association of Chicago; Torto Wheaton Research; Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table 2.5 Housing Units and Population, Chicago Central Area, 1970-2020. Illustration by U.S. Bureau of Census, Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table 2.6 Post Secondary School Enrollment. Illustration by Goodman Williams Group and Arthur Anderson LLP.
Table. 2.7 Allocation of Demand by Sector and District. Illustration by SOM, Arthur Anderson LLP and the Goodman Williams Group, and City of Chicago Department of Planning.

Chapter 3

Fig. 3.1 The Cermak Road Corridor today. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 3.2 The Cermak Road Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 3.3 The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 3.4 The proposed West Loop Transportation Center. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.
Fig. 3.5 The North Branch Canal in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.

Additional photographs on pg 34 by SOM.

Chapter 4

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Fig. 4.1.1 The Expanded Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.2 High-Density, Mixed-Use corridors. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.3 Neighborhoods and Special Places. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.4 Landmark and Character Districts. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.5 Industrial Districts and Corridors. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.6 Cultural Attractions and Tourist Destinations. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.7 Education and Learning. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.8a The Higher-Density Zoning Defines Today's Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.8b The Expanded Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.9 Pedestrians can cross the Expanded Loop in 20 minutes. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.10 The Expanded Loop consists of the West Loop, the Central Loop, the East Loop, and Illinois Center. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.11 High-Density, Mixed-Use Corridors. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.12 Stable, emerging and new neighborhoods in the Central Area with vacant land and underutilized sites. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.13 Neighborhoods and Special Places. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.14 Landmark Buildings and Districts within the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.15 Character Districts within the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.16 Maintain industrial districts and corridors in the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.17 Transit improvements should conveniently tie the tourist destinations together. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.18 A strengthened framework of tourist destinations and visitor districts. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.19 The distribution of Chicago Public School students in the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.20 The Future of Education in the Central Area. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.1.21 To ensure sustainable employment growth, the high density office core will expand to the west. Rendering by SOM.

Table 4.1.1 The Chicago Historic Resources Survey. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development.

TRANSPORTATION

Fig. 4.2.1 Promote region-wide transit investments. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.2 Much of the Central Area is within 5 minutes walk of a CTA station. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.3 Preserving rights-of-way is critical to providing new transit services. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.4 Convenient connections between all modes will be required. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.5 Central Area transit improvements will provide improved service to the Expanded Loop. Illustration by SOM, DLK Architecture and TranSystems Corporation.
Fig. 4.2.6 The future Carroll Avenue Busway. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.
Fig. 4.2.7 A new generation of transit vehicles will be on busways that will offer efficient and comfortable transit. Image provided by ACEA - Association des Constructeurs Européens d' Automobiles.
Fig. 4.2.8 The future busway system. Illustration by DLK Architecture and TranSystems Corporation.
Fig. 4.2.9 The future East-West Busway - below grade option. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.

Fig. 4.2.10 The future East-West Busway - street level option. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.

Fig. 4.2.11 The proposed West Loop Transportation Center along Clinton Street between the Ogilvie Transportation Center and Union Station. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.

Fig. 4.2.12 CTA Clinton Subway. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, and TranSystems Corporation.

Fig. 4.2.13 The proposed West Loop Transportation Center- A Multi-Modal Facility. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.

Fig. 4.2.14 The West Loop Transportation Center- entrance level. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.

Fig. 4.2.15 The West Loop Transportation Center- CTA Rail level. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation, DLK Architecture, TranSystems Corporation, and ImageFiction.

Fig. 4.2.16 CTA modernizations and enhancements. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.2.17 Enhanced intermodal bus connections at La Salle Street Station. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

Fig. 4.2.18 Potential New Green Line Rapid Transit Stations may be similar to the new Douglas Blue Line Stations. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.

Fig. 4.2.18 The Metra Electric Randolph Terminal is being reconstructed to provide better passenger service. Illustration by SOM and Image Fiction.

Fig. 4.2.19 The Metra Electric Randolph Terminal is being reconstructed to provide better passenger service to the East Loop, Millenium Park and Illinois Center. Illustration by SOM and Image Fiction.

Fig. 4.2.20 The existing pedway system. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.2.21 Pedestrian improvements will overcome physical barriers. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.2.22 Much of the Central Area is walkable. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.2.23 Much of the Central Area is walkable. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

Fig. 4.2.24 Levels of service at key intersections in 2020 under the base growth scenario, with added parking in the Loop. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

Fig. 4.2.25 Levels of service at key intersections in 2020 under the base growth scenario, with no parking added in the Loop. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

Fig. 4.2.26 It may be necessary to control the number of parking spaces in the Loop. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.2.27 The existing and proposed Bicycle Path System. Illustration by SOM, City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development and City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

Fig. 4.2.28 The Future water taxi system. Illustration by SOM, City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development and City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

Fig. 4.2.29 Bicycling in the Central Area will increase as a viable form of commuting. Photo by SOM.

Fig. 4.2.30 Water Taxis on the Chicago River provide convenient access to the West Loop transit stations. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.2.31 Potential Metra Expansion Projects. Illustration by Metra.

Fig. 4.2.32 Potential CTA Rail Projects Illustration by DLK Architecture and TranSystems Corporation.

Fig. 4.2.33 The Midwest Regional High Speed Rail Initiative. Illustration by Midwest High Speed Rail Coalition.

Fig. 4.2.34 Potential Express Rail to O'Hare and Midway Airports. Illustration by DLK Architecture and TranSystems Corporation.

Fig. 4.2.35 Trains used in the Midwest High-Speed Rail initiative may be similar to the Acela trains used in the Northeast Corridor System. Illustration by Amtrak.

Fig. 4.2.36 Express Rail Service to the airports will use dedicated train cars with special passenger amenities. Illustration by City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

Fig. 4.2.37 Transportation Improvements Years 2002-2006. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.

Fig. 4.2.38 Transportation Improvements Years 2007-2011. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.

Fig. 4.2.39 Transportation Improvements Years 2012-2016. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.

Fig. 4.2.40 Transportation Improvements Years 2017-2021. Illustration by Chicago Transportation Authority.

WATERFRONTS AND OPEN SPACES

Fig. 4.3.1 Central Area Open Space Opportunities. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.3.2 Strengthen the Lakefront as Chicago's great public space. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.3.3 Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous park system. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.3.4 Create the next generation of parks and plazas. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.3.5 Continue to landscape streets. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 4.3.6 Open space systems in the Central Area will form a connected network for residents and visitors.. Illustration by SOM.

DRAFT

Fig. 4.3.7 The lakefront open space system. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.8 Grant Park and Buckingham Fountain. Photograph by Panto Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.9 The Grant Park Master Plan. Illustration by Hargreaves Associates and Chicago Park District.
Fig. 4.3.10 Queen's Landing. Rendering by Christopher Grubbs, Hargreaves Associates and Chicago Park District.
Fig. 4.3.11 Neighborhood Park Area. Rendering by Christopher Grubbs, Hargreaves Associates and Chicago Park District.
Fig. 4.3.12 The McCormick Tribune Ice Rink at Millenium Park. Photograph from Public Building Commission of Chicago (PBC).
Fig. 4.3.13 Outdoor music pavilion and band shell at Millenium Park. Photo of model from PBC.
Fig. 4.3.14 Public fountains at Millenium Park. Rendering from PBC.
Fig. 4.3.15 Michigan Avenue gardens at Millenium Park. Photo from PBC.
Fig. 4.3.16 Concept of Wacker Drive and Monroe Harbor. Rendering by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.17 Burnham Park Framework Plan. Illustration by EDAW.
Fig. 4.3.18 The lakefront path north of Olive Park in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.19 The Lakefront Path today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.20 Chicago's Lakefront Legacy. Rendering by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.21 Shoreline islands form an outer breakwater as well as a natural habitat. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.22 The central lakefront as envisioned by the Plan of Chicago (1909). Illustration by Burnham Associates.
Fig. 4.3.23 The riverfront will become a major new public amenity on a par with the lakefront. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.24 The Main Branch of the Chicago River will be enhanced by a continuous riverwalk and underbridge connections. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.25 Water taxis on the Chicago River. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.26 Erie Terrace Park in River North. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.27 Natural habitat along the Chicago River. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.2.28 The Riverwalk Gateway under Lake Shore Drive. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.29 The South Branch today. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.30 The South Branch in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.31 The North Branch Canal in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.32 The North Branch Canal today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.33 The Central Area will provide a range of new parks and plazas, serving a variety of needs. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.34 Fort Dearborn Post Office today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.35 Fort Dearborn Park in 2020. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.36 I-94 and Monroe Street in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.37 I-94 and Monroe Street today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.38 The South River Corridor today. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.39 The South River Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.40 Green streets and infrastucture. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.41 North Dearborn Parkway. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.42 State Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.43 Randolph Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.44 Rush Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.45 Green streets and transit provide a 'green' infrastructure. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.46 Street furniture on Dearborn Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.47 Hanging planter in the Loop. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.48 Randolph Street newsrack. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.49 Street signage on Dearborn Street. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 4.3.50 Michigan Avenue at Roosevelt Street in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.51 Michigan Avenue at Roosevelt Street in 2020. Photo by Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 4.3.52 The Open Space Framework. Illustration by SOM.

Table 4.3.1 Central Area Open Space Opportunities. Illustration by Chicago Department of Planning and Development.

Chapter 5

Fig. 5.1 Central Area Subareas. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.2 Central Area Subareas. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.3 The Expanded Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.4 Adams Street and DesPlaines Street today. Photo by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 5.5 Adams Street and Des Plaines Street in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 5.6 The East Loop. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.7 Proposed improvements to stairs leading to the 'L'. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.8 Existing Wabash Avenue. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.9 Proposed Rebuilding of Wabash Avenue. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.10 Proposed Lakeshore East. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.11 Existing Lakeshore East. Photo by SOM.
Fig. 5.12 The Near North. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.13 The Near North. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.14 The South Loop and Near South. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.15 The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.16 The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor today. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.17 The South Michigan-Wabash-State Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 5.18 The Cermak Road Corridor. Illustration by SOM.

Fig. 5.19 The Cermak Road Corridor today. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.20 The Cermak Road Corridor in 2020. Rendering by SOM and Panto-Ulema.
Fig. 5.21 The Roosevelt Road Corridor. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.22 Proposed new high density residential neighborhood north of Roosevelt Road and east of the Chicago River. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.23 Proposed new residential neighborhood south of Roosevelt Road along the River
Fig. 5.24 The South River Corridor. Illustration by SOM.
Fig. 5.25 Strategies for Riverfront Open Space. Illustrations by SOM.

Chapter 6

Fig. 6.1 Central Area Skyline. Rendering by SOM.
Fig. 6.2 Conceptual Framework for Zoning in the Central Area. Rendering by SOM.

Table 6.1 Central Area Transportation Projects – Capital Cost by End Date. City of Chicago Department of Transportation.

DRAFT

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Alderman Walter Burnett, Jr.	27th Ward
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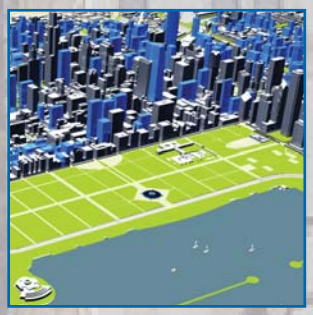
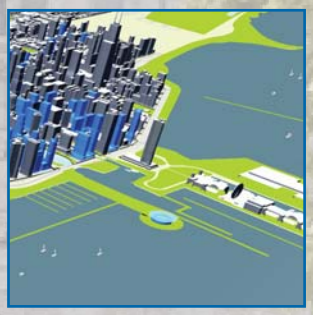




Central Area Action Plan

Adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission

August 20, 2009

ACTION PLAN TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) contains a wealth of information intended to encourage implementation of the policies and projects essential for the Central Area's effective functioning, growth and quality of life.

The CAAP builds upon the vision for the Central Area articulated in the 2003 Central Area Plan. It also represents input from community stakeholders and technical expertise from the project's Steering Committee, Task Forces, City staff and project planners.

The CAAP can be found on the City's website at: www.cityofchicago.org. The 2003 Central Area Plan is also available online for download.

Executive Summary

Provides an overview of the Action Plan, including the goals and objectives identified by three Task Forces: Economic Development & Land Use; Transportation; and Urban Design, Waterfront & Open Space. It also includes a list of the recommended Action Plan projects, phasing schedule and estimates of required investment.

Chapter 1: Economic Development & Land Use

Updates economic development and land use trends since the 2003 Central Area Plan. Based on this update, the Task Force recommended nine economic policy goals and new annual growth benchmarks.

Chapter 2: Transportation

Presents transportation trends in the Central Area since 2003. Six overriding policy goals are recommended, and the transportation projects related to each goal are identified.

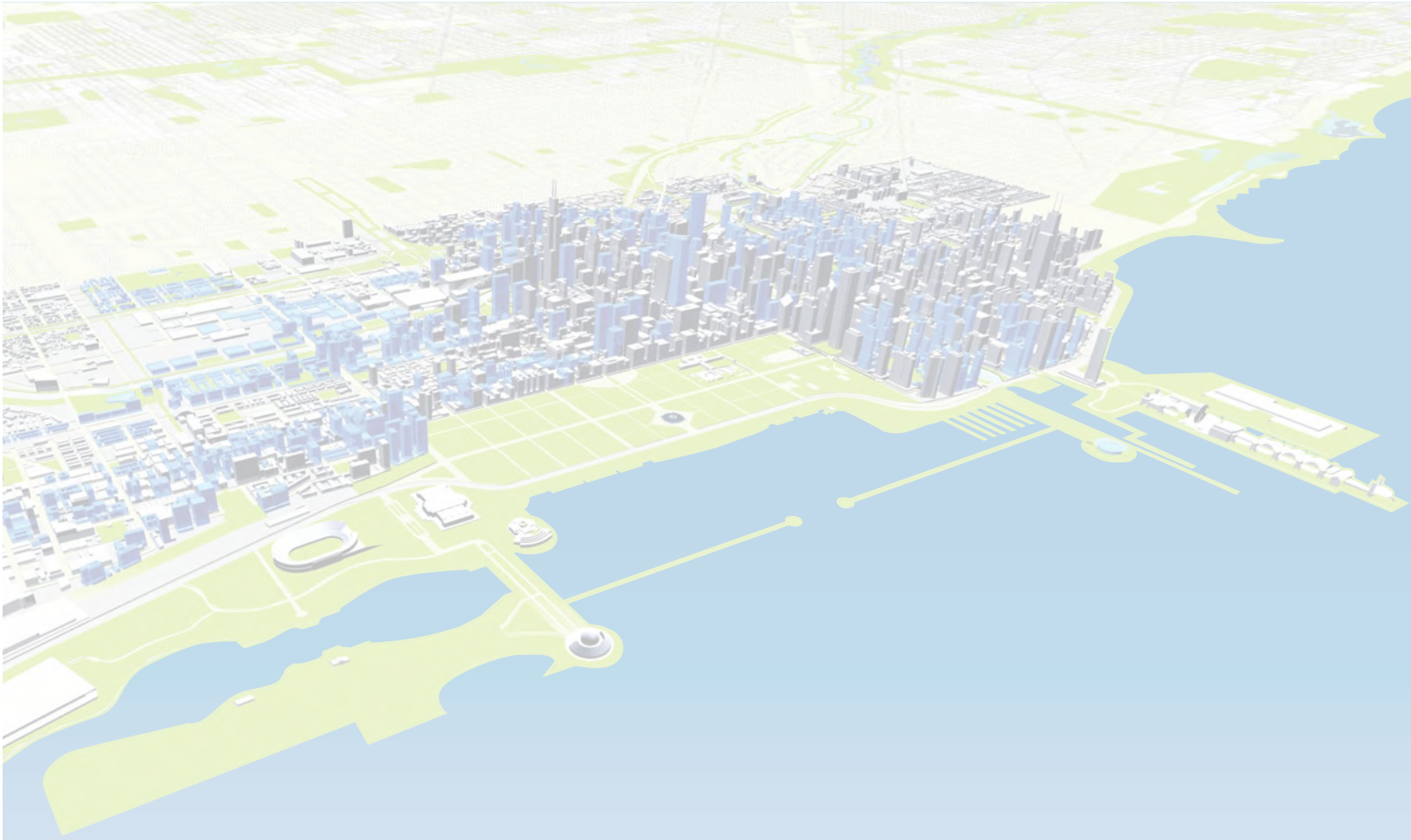
Chapter 3: Urban Design, Waterfront & Open Space

Describes the status of projects from the 2003 Central Area Plan and details the urban design, waterfront and open space projects included in this Plan. Five comprehensive policy goals summarize the findings and conclusions.

Chapter 4: Central Area Planning Subdistricts

The overall Central Area Action Plan is detailed for each of the twelve Central Area planning subdistricts. Each local action plan is suitable for use by city planners, citizens, and interested stakeholders.

Action Plan Project Map & Acknowledgements



Executive Summary

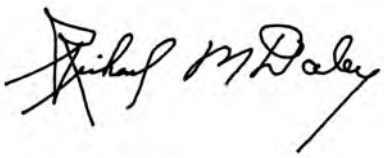
MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

As Mayor and on behalf of the citizens of Chicago, I want to thank you for your interest in the Central Area Action Plan.

Approved by the Chicago Plan Commission in August 2009, the Plan serves as a road map for public infrastructure investments, especially as they relate to transit and open space. The plan prioritizes potential projects, establishes cost estimates and identifies the next steps to make them a reality by 2020.

The mixed-use expansion of Chicago's Central Area in the last decade does more than highlight its appeal to residents, workers and visitors. It also underscores the area's potential for future growth. As one of the world's most livable cities, Chicago must build on its existing assets while creating new opportunities for neighborhood expansion and improvement. This Plan is a strategy to do both.

As with all of our greatest projects, public and private cooperation will be essential for the success of the Central Area Action Plan. I encourage you to review its recommendations and help support its goals for a healthy, vibrant future for Chicago.



Richard M. Daley, Mayor
City of Chicago

GREAT PLANS FOR A GREAT CITY

In the centennial year of Burnham and Bennett's 1909 Plan of Chicago, it is fitting to adopt a major new plan that carries its legacy into the new century.

The 2003 Central Area Plan responded to the remarkable transformation of Chicago's Downtown over the previous 20 years. The first Downtown plan produced by the City since 1958, it detailed the potential for the growth of the Central Area over the next two decades. The Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) takes the next step in implementing the goals of the Central Area Plan. The prioritized list of key transportation, urban design, waterfront, and open space projects set forth in this report are critical to achieving the vision of the Central Area Plan.

Under the leadership of Mayor Richard M. Daley, the Central Area has continued to prosper, gaining worldwide recognition as a great place to work, live, learn and play. Despite the current slowdown in the economy, long-term planning will position the Central Area for sustained growth, and will ensure that it continues to be the economic engine for the city, the region, the state and the Midwest.

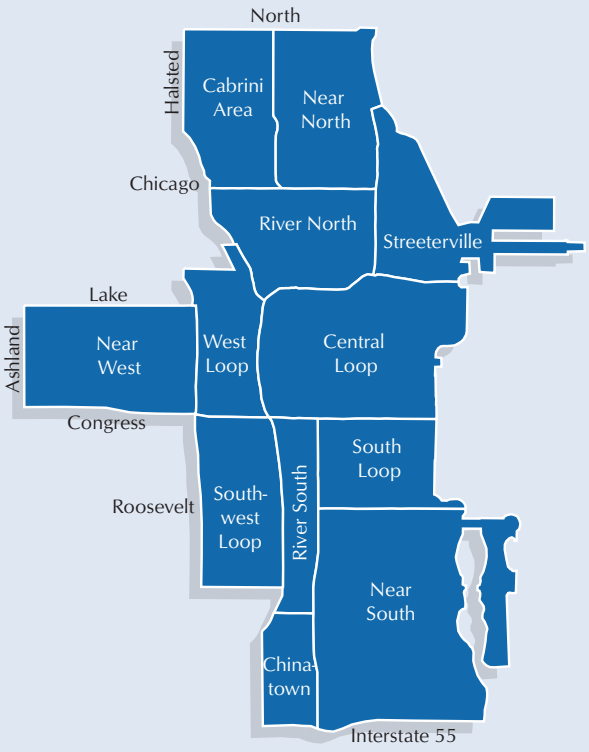
Image ES-1: Central Loop and West Loop

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The CAAP is the product of an 18-month planning and prioritization effort by a broad group of dedicated Chicagoans. Mayor Daley assembled a Steering Committee of 30 business and civic leaders to create an actionable plan to achieve the vision defined in the 2003 Central Area Plan. The CAAP is the result of the Committee's work and extensive input from three Task Forces that addressed economic development and land use; transportation; and urban design, waterfront, and open space.

The City of Chicago Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning (DZP), in collaboration with the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), provided direction for the planning project and coordinated with other government agencies including the Department of the Environment, Chicago Transit Authority, the Chicago Park District and Chicago Public Schools. Major stakeholders in the public and private sectors were consulted throughout the planning process. The Steering Committee and Task Force members, as well as the Consultant Team, Aldermen and key City of Chicago staff, are listed on the Acknowledgments page at the end of the Plan document.

Figure ES-1: Subdistricts



Subdistricts

The City's Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning divides the Central Area into twelve planning subdistricts.

In some cases the policies and projects contained within the Action Plan are located entirely in a single subdistrict; in many cases, however, the projects span several subdistricts.

To accompany the overall set of goals and projects for the Central Area (presented in Chapters 1, 2, and 3), detailed recommendations for each of these subdistricts are provided in Chapter 4.

An Action Plan Project Map summarizing the major projects for the entire area is provided at the end of the Plan document.

DEVELOPMENT GROWTH AND BENCHMARKS

The CAAP provides a road map for the continued implementation of the 2003 Central Area Plan. The Action Plan envisions that the Central Area will expand its role as the core of the regional economy and a center for cultural and recreational amenities.

The annual development benchmarks established in the 2003 Plan were met or exceeded since its publication. Residential development far surpassed expectations. More retail space, hotel rooms, student housing, and cultural facilities were added to the Central Area than projected, and office development was on target.

Updated development benchmarks for 2020 are provided in Table ES-1. The base-case scenario takes into account the current downturn in the economy and assumes moderate levels of public and private investment. The opportunity scenario envisions the growth potential of the Central Area if the goals and projects of the CAAP are implemented through increased public and private investment and the economy recovers by mid-decade.

Table ES-1: Annual Growth Benchmarks by Sector, 2008-2020

	Base Case Scenario	Opportunity Scenario
Population	4,200	5,300
Employment	3,500	5,000
Office (SF)	700,000	1,000,000
Retail (SF)	200,000	300,000
Cultural (SF)	85,000	100,000
Residential (Units)	2,600	3,300
Student Housing (Beds)	200	400
Hotel (Rooms)	500	700

The CAAP identifies key transportation improvements as the foundation for expanding the employment base, increasing residential population, accommodating more tourists, attracting more shoppers, and supporting more students. Meanwhile, sustainable urban design, additional open space, and improvements to the waterfront are recommended to enhance the attractive qualities of the environment that bond people to place.

The opportunity scenario estimates the Central Area could add an annual average of 1.0 million square feet of office space; 300,000 square feet of retail space; 3,300 housing units; 400 dormitory beds; and 700 hotel rooms. This scenario assumes that the growth in employment, population, and visitation is supported by significant investment in infrastructure, particularly transportation. This potential growth could be slowed if current economic conditions persist.

Image ES-2: Millennium Park

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE GOALS

Image ES-3: New high rise residential in the Central Loop

Nine goals are recommended by the Economic Development and Land Use Task Force to support growth in the region and Chicago's Central Area. The Transportation Task Force and Urban Design Task Force goals and projects described on the following pages provide additional implementation specifics.

Maintain Chicago's Position as the Economic Engine of the Region

Total employment in the Central Area is estimated to reach between 600,000 and 630,000 by 2020. These employment estimates represent an average growth of 3,500 to 5,000 jobs per year.

To reach this potential the Central Area must improve its current 45% - 50% share of regional office growth to approximately 60% by investing in mass transit and by strengthening its attractiveness to knowledge-based workers. Further, potential office sites in the Central Loop and West Loop must be protected by zoning for employment-generating uses.

Support Dense Residential Growth to Enhance Urban Vibrancy and Utilize the Urban Infrastructure

From 2000 to 2007, the residential population of the Central Area grew by nearly 54,000 to reach approximately 165,500, and population projections for 2020 range from 215,000 to 230,000. Densities allowed in the updated Chicago Zoning Ordinance (that went into effect in the Downtown districts in November 2004) must be maintained to achieve the growth projections upon which this Plan is premised.

Image ES-4: Riverfront development along the North Branch of the Chicago River

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE GOALS

Implement Cutting-Edge Environmental Practices and Green Building Techniques

Continuing implementation of environmentally responsible practices will maintain Chicago's role as a leader in sustainable urban design. Sustainable land use and economic development will promote efficient infrastructure growth, conserve energy, reduce materials consumption, mitigate negative environmental impacts (such as air pollution or storm water runoff), reduce automobile trips, and encourage use of alternative transportation modes. Key policies include encouraging compliance with green standards for building construction and neighborhood development, designing and installing sustainable infrastructure, concentrating development along high-use corridors and transit lines, promoting the use of public transit, and designing walkable, mixed-use environments.

Image ES-5: Dearborn Center Green Roof

Enhance Parks, Corridors and Waterfronts for Residents, Workers, Students and Visitors

Key projects will expand open space to keep pace with the needs of Central Area patrons. All development sectors—residential, retail, hotel, institutional and office—will benefit from high-quality streetscaping, waterfront, and parks projects. Enhancements to Millennium and Grant Park will further increase visitation. Expanding the harbor and riverfront system will allow more of the region's residents and visitors to enjoy the Chicago River and Lake Michigan.

Image ES-6: Navy Pier

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE GOALS

Better Connect to the World through O'Hare and Midway Airports As Well As the Regional Rail Network

Express train service to O'Hare and Midway airports, continued airport expansion, and improvements in and around Union Station will enhance Chicago's international and regional gateways. High-speed intercity rail expansion will increase regional travel to and from the Central Area.

Strengthen Chicago's Ties to the North American Economy through Efficient Freight Delivery

Chicago's global status as the largest inland international container port in North America must be protected through railroad carrier investments. With state and federal government initiatives and the CREATE program, Chicago can reduce rail junction conflicts to ensure that both passengers and freight can move efficiently. It is vital to continue to improve viaducts and roadways to accommodate freight movement. Requiring off-peak delivery hours and encouraging loading zone management will minimize the impacts of freight delivery in the Central Area.

Image ES-7: Proposed West Loop Transportation Center

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE GOALS

Invest in Transit to Support the Growth Envisioned by the Plan

The connection between transit and economic development is clear. Investments in transit are essential to maintain and grow the Central Area as the economic engine of the City, the region, the state and the Midwest. This Action Plan identifies specific transit needs and projects, with priority given to capacity enhancements for the existing system. Signal upgrades, passenger information systems, station modernization, CTA and Metra line extensions, intermodal (train to bus) facilities and dedicated transitways are the key recommended projects.

Image ES-8: Park Grill at Millennium Park

Frame a City/State/Federal Capital Investment Plan Supplemented by Private Participation

The more than $15 billion in capital expenditures identified in the CAAP will require funding from a variety of sources. Support for the Plan from residents and business leaders is critical. Recognizing that Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is the City's primary economic development tool, this Action Plan recommends that the majority of TIF revenues and related leveraged funding be dedicated to the long-term capital projects identified in the Plan, with emphasis on transportation projects.

Incorporate the Central Area Action Plan into the Regional Transportation Plan as well as State and Federal Capital Programs

With its support for high-density development, the CAAP reflects the principles of sustainable development, compact growth, transit-oriented design and smart growth. Because the Central Area is the centerpiece of the regional economy, implementation of the Plan should be supported with a coordinated approach to funding from several levels of government. The recommended capital improvements and their estimated costs should be incorporated in city, state and federal capital funding plans.

Image ES-9: Proposed Lakefront Trail expansion north of Navy Pier

Image ES-10: Proposed streetscape enhancements

TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND PROJECTS

Image ES-11: Proposed Lakefront Trail flyover at Illinois Street

Image ES-12: Upgraded passenger areas at Millennium Station

Six goals are recommended by the Transportation Task Force. Providing daily work trips into the Central Area is the focus of the current transportation system and places the greatest strains on it. Maintaining and upgrading this system supports employment growth and economic development. At the same time, new residential growth means more people making work trips both out of and within the Central Area. The CAAP also recognizes that the needs of visitors, including those traveling to the internationally important McCormick Place, are vital to Chicago's economy. Each transportation goal and related projects are described below.

Improve Transit in Central Area

Improving and expanding the Central Area's transit system is the most important investment needed to support continued employment and residential growth.

- The ongoing modernization of CTA stations has improved the transit environment in the Central Area, and funding of this program should be continued. Complementary investments in passenger information systems are required to increase utilization of the existing system.
- A new system of grade-separated transitways will allow faster transit connections within the Central Area. The Carroll Avenue Transitway will link the West Loop to Streeterville and River North. Additional transitways will enable travel east-west across the Loop, and north-south through Grant Park. These transitways will distribute passengers from Union Station and Ogilvie Transportation Center to destinations throughout the Central Area.
- New infill CTA stations on the existing rapid transit lines will serve growing Central Area neighborhoods such as the Near South, Near West and Cabrini Area.
- A combination of projects will better link the numerous transit resources that serve the primary employment growth district in the Central Area—the West Loop. In the short term, building an intermodal facility and enhancing access at Union Station will improve the function of the Central Area's busiest transit station. In the long term, the multi-level West Loop Transportation Center will tie together new transitways, commuter rail services, a new Clinton Subway and regional high-speed rail services.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND PROJECTS

Increase Regional Transit Capacity

The regional transit network converges on the Central Area, and this relationship must be strengthened by strategic investments in existing infrastructure as well as new services. These projects are shown as "Regional Supporting Projects" in the Plan document, but not included in the total infrastructure budget for the Central Area.

- A system-wide rebuilding of CTA rail signals and track infrastructure is foremost in expanding capacity and enhancing safety, particularly on highly utilized services such as the Blue and Red Lines.
- Metra will extend and upgrade service on the Union Pacific-West and Union Pacific-Northwest lines.
- Extensions of the CTA Red, Orange and Yellow Lines will bring rapid transit service to underserved neighborhoods in Chicago and close-in suburbs.
- Metra's proposed Southeast Service will connect high-growth suburban areas to employment concentrations in Central Area.
- Metra's proposed STAR line will improve regional transit connectivity by linking developing suburban areas to one another and O'Hare International Airport.

Image ES-13: Loop "L"

TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND PROJECTS

Image ES-14: The bicycle station at Millennium Park

Image ES-15: Additional roadway connections are to be added along the South Branch of the Chicago River

Improve the Pedestrian Environment

An increase in transit trips must be supported by improvements to the associated on-street and off-street pedestrian environment.

- With strong passenger growth at Union Station and Ogilvie Transportation Center, the pedestrian capacity along Clinton and Canal Streets near these stations needs to be expanded.
- Growth in tourism drives the need for pedestrian improvements along the Illinois/Grand corridor to better connect Navy Pier with hotels, restaurants and other tourist attractions.
- Pedestrian improvements will also build on the existing trail network, particularly along the Lakefront and Riverfront.

Manage Traffic Circulation

An interconnected street grid is the key to traffic circulation and pedestrian mobility. Making the existing grid network safer and more functional is a focus for the Central Area.

- Phase Two of the Wacker Drive reconstruction will reconfigure the two levels along the north-south portion (south of Lake Street), making circulation easier and safer for both drivers and pedestrians.
- A major improvement of North Lake Shore Drive will smooth the curve at Oak Street and expand intersection capacity at Chicago Avenue. These improvements will enhance the safety and function of the road network and create additional open space.
- The City will maximize recent investments in signal interconnects, traffic cameras and traffic control assistants by creating a Traffic Management Center. By ensuring mobility during major events, the Center will safeguard the security of the Central Area's assets and its people.
- A Wells-Wentworth Connector and new bridges across the South Branch of the Chicago River will fill gaps in the grid network through this largely undeveloped portion of the Central Area.

Encourage Alternative Modes

Infrastructure improvements for non-automobile modes of travel will increase bicycling and water taxi usage.

- The bicycle network will be expanded and improved with additional on-street bicycle lanes and markings.
- Additional bicycle stations in the West Loop will make it easier for commuters to store and rent bicycles.
- The Central Area's existing network of trails and greenways will be better connected to its waterfronts and open spaces.
- Completion of the Riverwalk will provide new opportunities for walking and water taxi service for residents and workers along the Chicago River.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND PROJECTS

Improve National and International Connections

Transportation investments must continue to strengthen the Central Area's connection to the Midwest, the U.S. and the world.

- Future dedicated Airport Express train service to O'Hare and Midway airports will improve the attractiveness of the Central Area for tourists, business travellers and residents
- Investment in Union Station and the West Loop Transportation Center will link transit to regional high-speed rail.
- Completion of improvements to the O'Hare runway, terminal and roadways (as well as investments at Midway Airport) will keep Chicago a competitive place for international and national business.

Image ES-16: Block 37 redevelopment

URBAN DESIGN, WATERFRONT & OPEN SPACE GOALS AND PROJECTS

Five key goals with related policies and projects are recommended by the Urban Design, Waterfront and Open Space Task Force. They build upon the work of the 2003 Plan and provide an orderly program of improvements. These improvements bond people and place, and will enhance the Central Area's attractiveness to businesses, residents and visitors.

Strengthen Chicago As an Environmentally Sustainable City

Chicago will remain the leader in urban sustainability. The Central Area will be composed of dynamic mixed-use districts served by transit and linked by pedestrian-oriented streets and welcoming open spaces. Each urban design, waterfront and open space project will use green building materials and environmental best practices.

Strengthen the Lakefront as Chicago's Great Public Space

Urban design, in conjunction with transportation projects, will enhance the Lakefront.

- A high priority is the expansion of the Lakefront Trail and associated park areas from Navy Pier to North Avenue Beach.
- The Lakefront Trail bridge at the Chicago River, the pedestrian connection at Queen's Landing and the Lakefront Transitway are key projects that will improve connections to the Lakefront and link its various attractions.
- Gateway Harbor at Navy Pier will further enliven the Lakefront by expanding boat access to this major activity center.

Image ES-17: DuSable Harbor

URBAN DESIGN, WATERFRONT & OPEN SPACE GOALS AND PROJECTS

Develop the Chicago Riverfront as a Continuous System of Premier Public Places

Continuous public access to the River will link existing connections and new access points.

- Five phases of riverfront improvements will begin with the Main Branch, then continue north to Halsted and south to Chinatown. Vertical access from street-level and under-bridge connections are needed for pedestrian circulation.
- Wherever feasible, new developments will have street-level retail space oriented to and accessible from the Riverwalk.
- A riverfront management entity should be established to provide oversight of the Riverwalk system.

Image ES-18: Enhanced Riverfront plaza

Create the Next Generation of Downtown Parks

Parks and open space will be incorporated into plans for large projects, as well as added in densely developed areas.

- A wide range of recreational and natural amenities will be created on Northerly Island.
- Capping the Kennedy will add green space in the West Loop to attract office and residential growth.
- Lakefront open space will be enhanced through a public-private partnership at DuSable Park.
- The expansion of Ping Tom Park will include a rail underpass, a community center and a boat house.
- Railscape and other improvements in Grant Park will creatively reuse existing land and infrastructure to add usable open space.
- The proposed private redevelopment of the Fort Dearborn Post Office site will include needed open space for River North.

Image ES-19: Ping Tom Park

Complete the Central Area's Framework of Richly Landscaped Streets and Boulevards

Chicago's rich heritage of signature landscaped north-south streets and corridors will be augmented with a similar series of east-west streets.

- Division St.; Congress Parkway; Grand Ave. and Illinois St. (from Michigan Ave. to Lake Shore Dr.); Randolph St. (east of Michigan Ave.); South Wacker Dr.; and the Union Station area will be the primary focus for streetscape improvements.
- Interstate highway interchanges into the Central Area will be attractively landscaped as they are upgraded.
- Innovative green water management techniques and materials will be used to transform alleys and streets.
- Special lighting illuminating buildings and civic features will be installed in partnership with private owners, particularly along Michigan Avenue's historic street-wall.

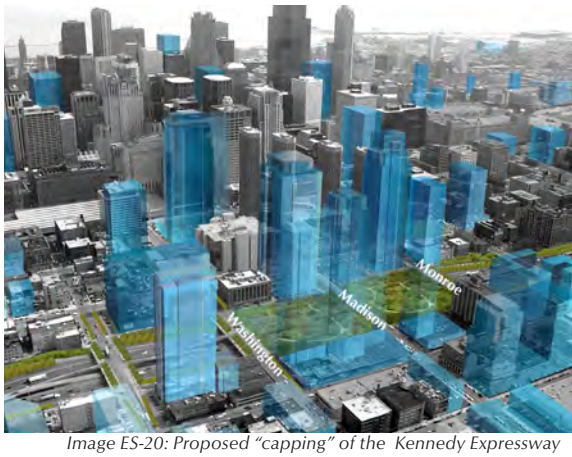


Image ES-20: Proposed "capping" of the Kennedy Expressway

ACTION PLAN PROJECTS

The major capital projects included in the CAAP will require a $15.55 billion investment by the year 2020. The bulk of this investment is for improvements to the public transportation infrastructure serving the Central Area.

An additional $6.25 billion in regional transit capacity projects are listed as key supporting elements (see page ES-20). While the City should support these projects, the CTA and Metra will lead their development and implementation, and they are not included in the bottom-line budget for the Central Area.

A three-phase implementation plan, based upon the priorities set by the Task Forces and the City's capacity to stage and accelerate projects, assigns projects to three consecutive four-year intervals between 2008 and 2020.

Engineering and planning work must begin immediately upon the Plan's adoption to reach many of the 2016 and 2020 targets.

Individual projects are listed and described on the following page. Cost estimates and the project phasing plan are detailed in the pages that follow.

Table ES-2: Central Area Project Cost Summary

Phase	Cost (2007 $)	Annual Average
2008-2012	$6,207,100,000	$1,551,775,000
2012-2016	$5,208,000,000	$1,302,000,000
2016-2020	$4,135,000,000	$1,033,750,000
GRAND TOTAL	**$15,550,100,000**	**$3,887,525,000**

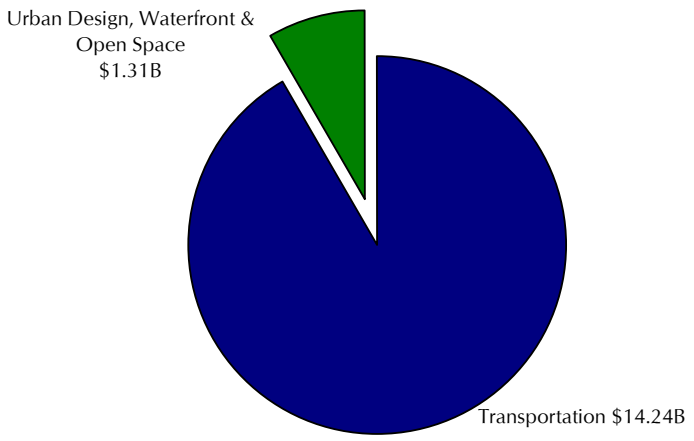
CAAP Employment Impacts

Implementation of the CAAP would provide an economic boost to the City and the region, primarily by supporting jobs in construction and related industries. The investment is also expected to support continued growth of the employment base in the downtown office district. Key statistics include:

- The $15.55 billion infrastructure investment in the Central Area would directly support more than 11,000 jobs per year over the 12-year implementation period of the Plan. According to regional wage estimates for construction-oriented employment, that totals $8.8 billion in wages for the local economy (2008 $).
- Indirect employment from "supporting industries" would add another 5,000 jobs per year and $2.2 billion in wages.
- Furthermore, this level of investment is expected to support the creation of 18,000 additional permanent jobs in the Central Area by 2020.

Note: Estimates based on employment impact figures developed by the U.S. DOT via its JOBMOD2 model. Wage data based on 2008 information from the Illinois Department of Employment Security.

Figure ES-2: Overall Costs by Project Type
Central Area Action Plan Projects



ACTION PLAN PROJECTS

Central Area Transportation Projects

Airport Express Rail Service: Direct express rapid transit service from the Central Loop to terminals at O'Hare and Midway

Carroll Avenue Transitway: Limited-stop, dedicated transit link connecting West Loop, River North and Streeterville

Clinton Street Transitway: Link between Carroll Avenue Transitway and West Loop Transportation Center

Clinton Subway: New West Loop subway connecting Cermak/Chinatown and North/Clybourn CTA stations

CREATE Program: Infrastructure investments to improve reliability of freight and passenger rail (3 phases)

CTA Infill Stations: New "L" stations along existing rail lines to increase access to transit (4 stations)

CTA Signal & Capacity Upgrades: Signal modernization and elimination of slow zones on rail network

CTA Station Modernization: Upgrades to existing stations in the Central Area (3 phases)

East-West Transitway: Limited-stop, dedicated transit service through Central Loop beneath Monroe Street

Lakefront Transitway: Limited-stop and dedicated transit service connecting Near South to Streeterville through Grant Park

Metra Extension & Upgrades: Improvements to the Union Pacific Northwest and West lines (2 lines)

North Lake Shore Drive Improvements: Smoothed curve at Oak Street to improve safety

Pedestrian Bridges over Chicago River: Improved pedestrian connections to train stations in West Loop and tourist areas in Streeterville (2 bridges)

South Branch Bridges: Connect street grid over the Chicago River at Taylor and 16th Streets or Polk (2 bridges)

Transit Passenger Information System: Improved program for consistent signage and dynamic passenger information across all modes (2 phases)

Union Station Access / Intermodal Upgrades: Improved access points and wayfinding outside the station and an intermodal transfer facility along Jackson

Union Station Capacity/Facility Upgrades: Upgraded passenger and customer amenities inside the station, including waiting areas and improved platform areas

Wacker Drive Reconstruction - Phase II: Upgrade to the north-south portion of Wacker Drive

Wells-Wentworth Connector: New north-south arterial through River South between Harrison and Cermak (2 phases)

West Loop Bicycle Station: Bicycle parking and locker room to serve bike commuters

West Loop Transportation Center: Four-level intermodal transfer facility beneath Clinton Street

Urban Design, Waterfront & Open Space Projects

Chicago River Management Entity: Establish, fund, and empower an organization to develop and manage riverfront improvements

DuSable Park: New park space at the inlet of the Chicago River commemorating Chicago's founding settler

Fort Dearborn Park: Open space as part of redevelopment of current Post Office site

Gateway Harbor: New boat marina and amenities connecting Dime Pier to the Navy Pier headlands

Grant Park Renovations: Reconstruction of the Monroe Street parking structure will be coordinated with facility and amenity enhancements (to be determined)

Kennedy Cap: Create new park land over the expressway between Monroe and Washington

Kennedy Corridor Enhancements: Improved connections across the expressway with traffic calming and landscaping

Lakefront Trail Bridge: Flyover connection crossing the Chicago River at the Lake

Lakefront Trail Expansion: Expansion of the park and trail into the Lake between North Avenue and Navy Pier

Lighting Enhancements: Lighting improvements along signature streets using grant or loan program to encourage private investment (2 phases)

Northerly Island Park Improvements: A new park highlighting sustainable design features to serve as an outdoor museum for conservation

Pedestrian Connection at Queen's Landing: Improvements of the pedestrian connection between Grant Park at Buckingham Fountain and the Lakefront Trail

Ping Tom Park Phase II: Expansion north of 18th Street along the South Branch of the Chicago River (2 phases)

Railscape Improvements: Screening of the rail line in Grant Park south to Museum Place with increased park land

Riverfront Improvements: Continued development of recreational and pedestrian system along the Main, North and South Branches of the Chicago River (5 phases)

Streetscape/Corridor Improvements: Upgraded on-street pedestrian environment for key east-west corridors, Wacker Drive and Union Station area (2 phases)

PHASING PLAN 2008-2012

Transportation Projects		Cost
Central Area Transit	CTA Station Modernization (4 Stations)	$360,000,000
	Carroll Avenue Transitway	$260,000,000
	Clinton Street Transitway	$60,000,000
	CTA Infill Station (Morgan - Green/Pink)	$60,000,000
	Transit/Passenger Information Systems	$10,000,000
Regional Transit Capacity	CTA Signal & Capacity Upgrades	$1,500,000,000
	CREATE Program (Phase I)	$750,000,000
	Metra UP-W Upgrades	$536,000,000
	Metra UP-NW Extension & Upgrades	$419,000,000
Pedestrian Environment	Union Station Access/Intermodal Upgrades	$30,000,000
Traffic Circulation	Wacker Drive Reconstruction (Phase II)	$350,000,000
	Wells-Wentworth Connector (Phase I)	$30,000,000
Alternative Modes	West Loop Bicycle Station	$1,000,000
National/International	Airport Express Rail Service	$1,500,000,000
Connections	Union Station Capacity/Facility Upgrades	$60,000,000
	Subtotal	**$5,926,000,000**

Urban Design, Waterfront & Open Space Projects		Cost
Urban Design	Congress Parkway Streetscape	$19,000,000
	Grand & Illinois Streetscape	$19,000,000
	Kennedy Corridor Enhancements	$10,000,000
	East Randolph Streetscape	$8,750,000
	Lighting Enhancements (Michigan, Congress & Wacker)	$600,000
Waterfront	Main Branch Riverfront (Phase I)	$46,000,000
	Gateway Harbor	$30,000,000
	Chicago River Management Entity	$250,000
Open Space	Northerly Island Park Improvements	$75,000,000
	Grant Park Improvements North	$35,000,000
	Ping Tom Phase II (Site Dev./Railway Underpass)	$20,000,000
	DuSable Park	$17,000,000
	Pedestrian Connection at Queen's Landing	$500,000
	Subtotal	**$281,100,000**

TOTAL COST (2008-2012) $6,207,100,000

NOTE: Costs are preliminary and based on current best practices; pre-engineering studies will be needed to refine estimates. Costs presented in 2007 dollars.

PHASING PLAN 2012-2016

Transportation Projects		Cost
Central Area Transit	West Loop Transportation Center	$2,000,000,000
	Clinton Subway (Phase I)	$1,000,000,000
	CTA Station Modernization (3 Stations)	$270,000,000
	East-West Transitway (Monroe)	$200,000,000
	Lakefront Transitway	$150,000,000
	CTA Infill Station (Cermak or 18th - Green)	$60,000,000
	CTA Infill Station (Division - Brown/Purple)	$60,000,000
	Transit/Passenger Information Systems	$10,000,000
Regional Transit Capacity	CREATE Program (Phase II)	$750,000,000
Traffic Circulation	North Lake Shore Drive Improvements	$200,000,000
	South Branch Bridge at Taylor Street	$50,000,000
	Wells-Wentworth Connector (Phase II)	$15,000,000
	Subtotal	**$4,765,000,000**

Urban Design, Waterfront & Open Space Projects		Cost
Urban Design	West Loop/Union Station Area Streetscape	$33,000,000
	Division Streetscape	$21,000,000
	Lighting Enhancements (LaSalle & Randolph)	$400,000
Waterfront	Lakefront Trail Expansion	$177,000,000
	North Branch Riverfront (River North)	$75,000,000
	Main Branch Riverfront (Phase II)	$46,000,000
	South Branch Riverfront (Downtown)	$15,000,000
Open Space	Lakefront Trail Bridge	$25,000,000
	Ping Tom Phase II (Multi-Purpose Center/Boathouse)	$18,000,000
	Grant Park South Railscape	$17,200,000
	Grant Park Central Railscape	$7,900,000
	Central Station Area Railscape	$7,500,000
	Subtotal	**$443,000,000**

TOTAL COST (2012-2016) $5,208,000,000

NOTE: Costs are preliminary and based on current best practices; pre-engineering studies will be needed to refine estimates. Costs presented in 2007 dollars.

PHASING PLAN 2016-2020

Transportation Projects		Cost
Central Area Transit	Clinton Subway (Phase II)	$2,000,000,000
	CTA Station Modernization (2 Stations)	$180,000,000
	CTA Infill Station (Clark/18th - Orange)	$60,000,000
Regional Transit Capacity	CREATE Program (Phase III)	$1,200,000,000
Pedestrian Environment	Pedestrian Bridges over River (Streeterville, West Loop)	$60,000,000
Traffic Circulation	South Branch Bridge (16th or Polk)	$50,000,000
	Subtotal	**$3,550,000,000**

Urban Design, Waterfront & Open Space Projects		Cost
Urban Design	Kennedy Cap	$500,000,000
Waterfront	South Branch Riverfront (River South)	$75,000,000
Open Space	Fort Dearborn Park	$10,000,000
	Subtotal	**$585,000,000**

TOTAL COST (2016-2020) $4,135,000,000

NOTE: Costs are preliminary and based on current best practices; pre-engineering studies will be needed to refine estimates. Costs presented in 2007 dollars.

Regional Supporting Projects

These transit projects improve the regional system centered on the Central Area, but are located entirely outside the study area and thus are not included in the Action Plan budget. The City should continue to coordinate with the Chicago Transit Authority and Metra as they study and plan these major proposed investments, which could total an additional $6.25 billion.

CTA Line Extensions - Red, Yellow, Orange: Expanded transit connections to the Central Area

CTA Circle Line: new transit "loop" providing connections between rail lines and reducing congestion in Loop

Metra SouthEast Service: New commuter rail line expanding service to the southeast suburbs

Metra STAR Line: New intersuburban rail line connecting Joliet, Rolling Meadows, and O'Hare airport

Phase	Project	Cost
2012-2016	CTA Red Line Extension	$1,000,000,000
	Metra SouthEast Service	$550,000,000
	CTA Orange Line Extension	$300,000,000
	CTA Yellow Line Extension	$300,000,000
2016-2020	CTA Circle Line	$3,000,000,000
	Metra STAR Line	$1,100,000,000
	TOTAL	**$6,250,000,000**

IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING

Funding for a program of the size, complexity and duration of the CAAP must be assembled from a variety of sources, including the City, other local agencies, the State of Illinois, the federal government and the private sector.

The capital improvements are estimated to cost $15.55 billion over the 2008 to 2020 time frame. Analysis of historic funding patterns for the kinds of projects included in the Plan suggests that the City's share of the total costs could range from $6 to $8 billion, or an average of $500 to $667 million per year.

Private Partnerships

Whenever possible, the City will continue to defray the costs of the CAAP program by partnering with developers, benefactors and other private interests on implementing individual projects. Examples for this type of arrangement include:

- The development of parks and open space within or adjacent to development sites in the Central Area. An example is the agreement with developers of the proposed Spire to fund the creation of DuSable Park.
- Creation of stations, shelters or other transit facilities which are integrated with adjacent developments, such as the ongoing agreements along the Carroll Avenue Transitway right-of-way to protect and preserve areas for stations within high-rise buildings.

The City of Chicago's Capital Improvement Plan

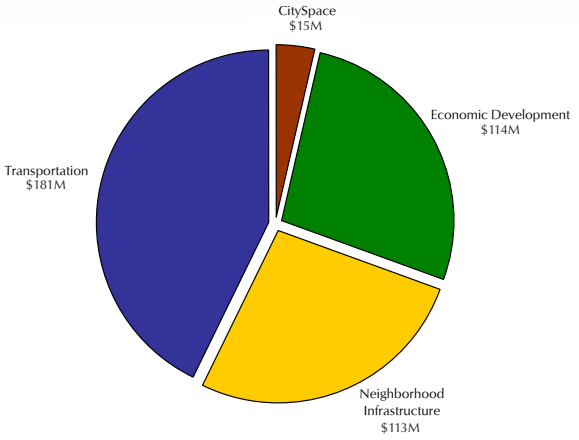
The mechanism for scheduling the funding, equipment, and personnel for City projects is the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP is updated annually and establishes priorities and schedules for all public improvement projects within a five-year period, given available resources.

The overall 2007 capital budget was $2.0 billion. Programs related to improvements at O'Hare and Midway Airports, the O'Hare Modernization program, Municipal Building and Water and Sewer accounted for over three-quarters of this budget. The remaining programs were allocated $423.1 million, distributed among the following categories (as shown in the chart at the top right):

- CitySpace: $14.9 million for parks, greenways, lakefront
- Economic development: $114 million for streetscaping, industrial streets, viaduct improvements
- Neighborhood infrastructure: $113.4 million for aldermanic menu of services, alleys, lighting, sidewalks
- Transportation: $180.8 million for bridges, intersections, major streets, signals, transit

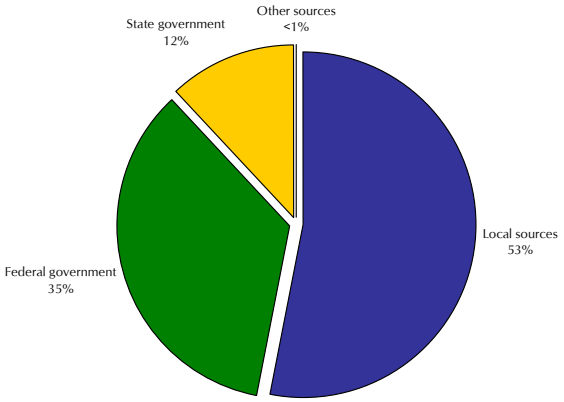
Funding sources for CIP projects include tax increment financing (TIF), general obligation (GO) bonds repaid by property tax revenues, state grants, federal grants and miscellaneous sources.

Figure ES-3: 2007 City of Chicago Capital Budget
CitySpace, Economic Development, Neighborhood Infrastructure, and Transportation Programs



Source: City of Chicago

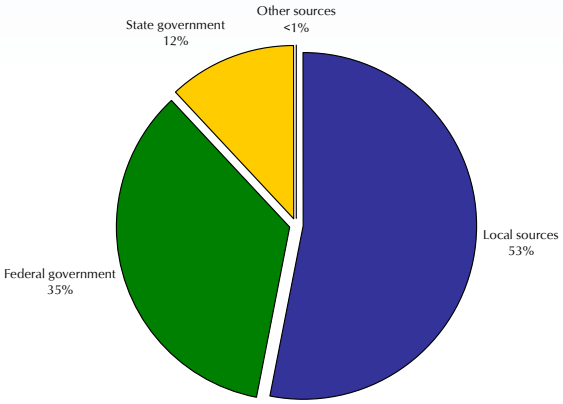
Figure ES-4: 2007 City of Chicago Capital Budget Funding Sources
CitySpace, Economic Development, Neighborhood Infrastructure, and Transportation Programs



Source: City of Chicago

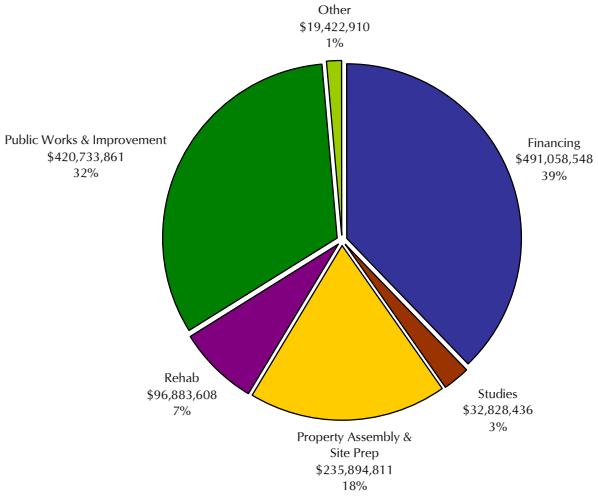
IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING

Figure ES-5:
Transit Capital Funding Patterns
Top 50 US Transit Agencies



Source: RTA

Figure ES-6:
Central Area TIF District Spending Categories, 1997-2006



Source: City of Chicago

Transportation Funding

Public transportation projects in the U.S. are usually funded by a combination of fare revenues, federal grants and state and local subsidies that include dedicated tax revenues.

The transportation program in the City's CIP in 2006 and 2007 relied upon federal and state money for 80% to 90% of its funding. This funding has been relatively consistent over the past two years, with $70 million in annual state funding and $80 to $85 million in annual federal funding.

Capital investment at the state and federal levels has been decreasing in the past decade. *2007 – The Year of Decision: Regional Transportation Strategic Plan,* prepared as part of the *RTA Moving Beyond Congestion program*, reported that the top 50 transit agencies in the U.S. relied heavily on local funds for their capital investments (as illustrated by the chart to the left):

- 53% from local sources
- 12% from the state government
- 35% from the federal government
- <1% from other sources

Recent trends, however, indicate an increased federal interest in transportation funding. Federal economic stimulus funds could accelerate plan implementation and increase the federal funding share.

Tax Increment Financing

Tax Increment Financing could serve as a source of funding for capital projects within the Central Area. Although it might not cover all of the City's local share of costs, TIF can provide a source of funding for initial activities, such as preliminary engineering or site preparation.

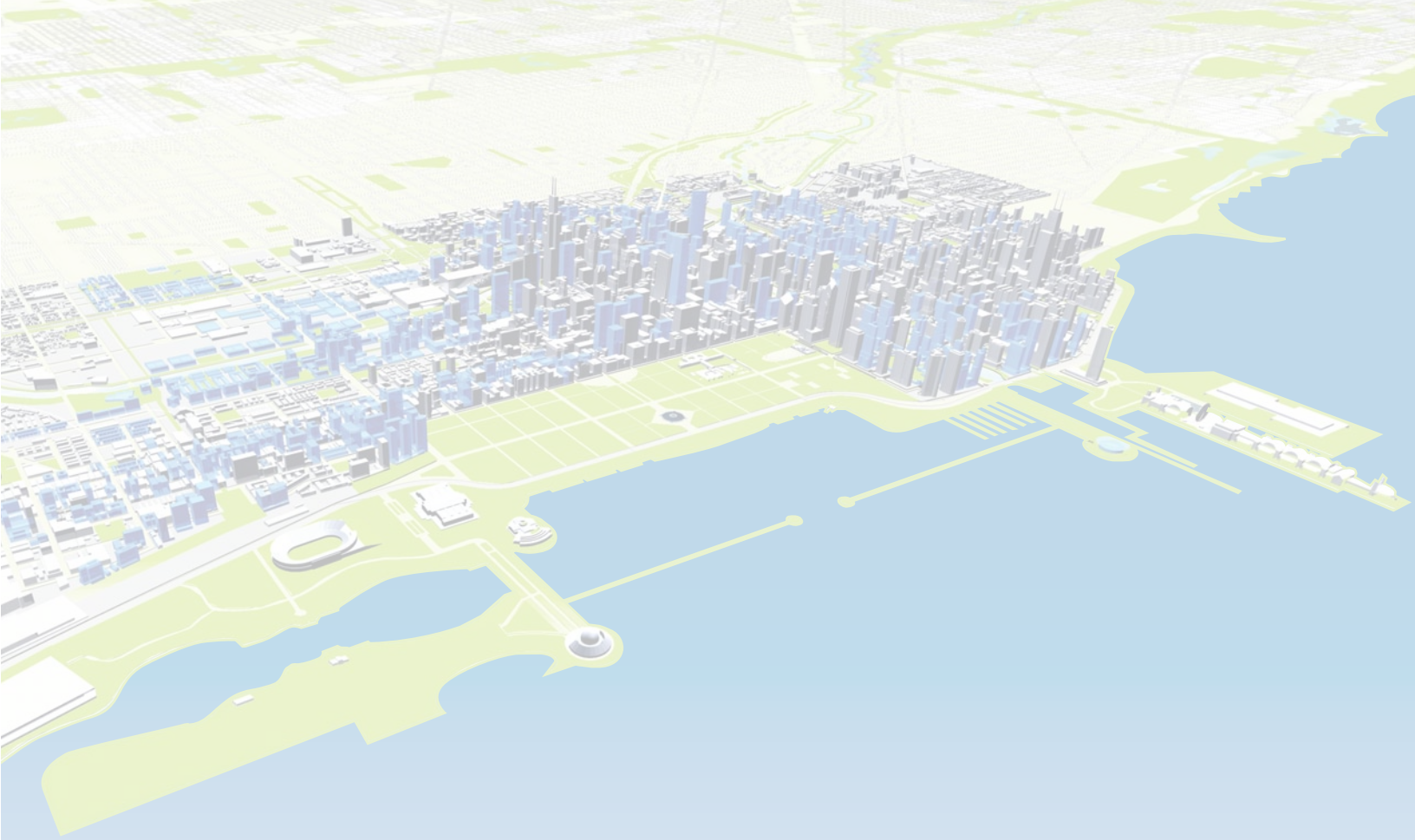
The established TIF districts will remain essential to funding the recommendations of the CAAP. They should be protected, expanded, and aggressively used in a coordinated way to ensure a secure funding framework.

A useful statutory feature of TIF districts is the ability to share revenues among contiguous districts, to accommodate large-scale projects that may exceed a given year's incremental revenue collection or that may span multiple districts. Of the nineteen TIF districts located in the Central Area, sixteen districts are contiguous. The sum of total budgets for the Central Area TIF districts over their twenty-three year life spans is $3.2 billion.

The top three spending categories in the Central Area TIF districts between 1997 and 2006 were:

- Financing costs for bonds: $491 million (37.9% of total)
- Public works and improvement: $421 million (32.4%)
- Property assembly and site preparation: $236 million (18.2%)

The CAAP recommends focusing TIF spending on the major public works projects identified in this Plan.



Chapter 1
Economic Development & Land Use

DEVELOPMENT GROWTH AND BENCHMARKS

The 2003 Central Area Plan combined an economic sector analysis with a comprehensive physical plan. It included an analysis of annual demand for land by market sector through 2020 under both a current-trend (base-case) scenario and an opportunity (best-case) scenario. The base-case scenario accounts for the current downturn in the economy and assumes moderate levels of public and private investment. The opportunity scenario envisions the growth potential of the Central Area if the goals and projects of the CAAP are implemented through increased public and private investments.

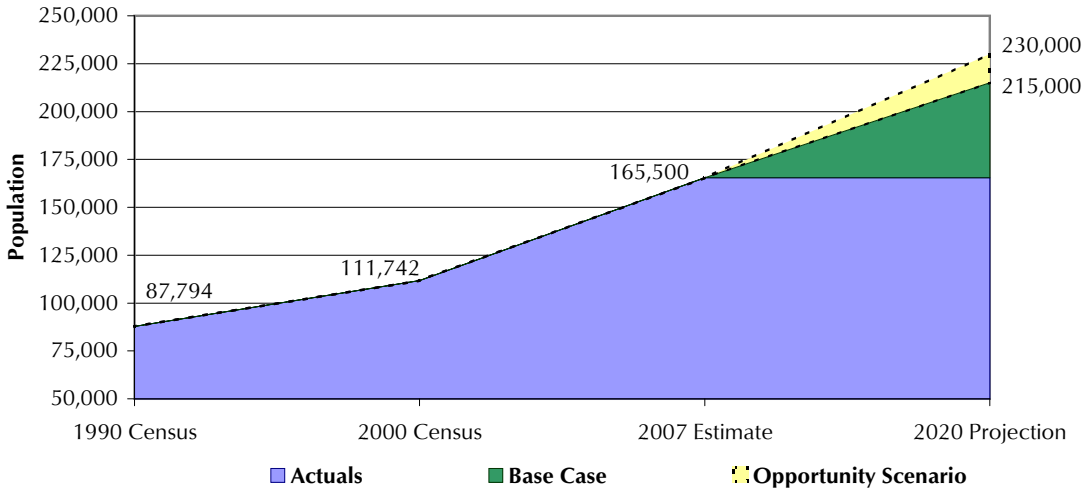
Continuing that approach, the Central Area Action Plan examines the performance of the Central Area since 2000 and sets new economic benchmarks under the two scenarios (see Table 1-1 below for a comparison between the projections and actual trends). The potential growth could be slowed if current economic conditions persist.

- Office growth projections were on target as of 2007, although not primarily driven by job growth. New space additions came from changing office technology and user space needs as well as funding availability.
- Retail development exceeded projections as a result of stronger than anticipated residential growth.
- Educational facility development surpassed projections, with student housing emerging as a growth sector supporting new levels of full-time student enrollments.
- Hotel development was also close to projections, with the market recovering in 2005-2006. The 9/11/2001 terrorist attacks brought about a prolonged decline in tourism, and the "jobless" economic recovery hurt convention activity and business travel. Millennium Park was the foremost factor in bringing tourists back after the downturn.
- Residential growth between 2000 and 2007 far exceeded the projections in the 2003 Plan, reflecting the low interest rate environment, the draw of a new generation of residential projects and the growing appeal of the Central Area to empty nesters as well as younger owners and renters.

Table 1-1: Central Area Growth Trends and Forecasts

	Annual Projections 2003 *Central Area Plan*		Actual Development 2000-2007		Annual Growth Benchmarks 2008-2020	
	Base Case	Opportunity Scenario	Total	Annual Average	Base Case	Opportunity Scenario
Office (SF)	1,600,000	2,200,000	15,135,000	1,892,000	700,000	1,000,000
Retail (SF)	250,000	350,000	3,160,000	395,000	200,000	300,000
Residential (Units)	1,800	2,200	33,464	4,183	2,600	3,300
Student Housing (Beds)	150	180	4,206	526	200	400
Hotel (Rooms)	600	700	4,323	540	500	700

Figure 1-1: Central Area Population Trends and Projections, 1990-2020



DEVELOPMENT GROWTH AND BENCHMARKS

New Development Benchmarks

In light of development trends over the past eight years, updated demographic data, input from Task Force members and market analyses, 2020 benchmarks have been revised (see Table 1-1). While projections for retail and hotel rooms are similar to the 2003 Plan, the growth benchmarks have been adjusted upward for student housing and downward for the office sector. Residential benchmarks are higher than the 2003 Plan, but lower than the housing boom years of 2005 - 2007.

Employment Trends and Projections

Highlights of economic trends and projections include the following:

- The Chicago metro area has a distribution of jobs similar to the U.S. but, with its strong economic ties to the Midwest, has been growing more slowly.
- Over 40% of exports from the Chicago metropolitan area are to the "rest of the Midwest", which suffers from a continuing turndown in manufacturing, particularly in the auto industry.
- During the national recession of 2001 and the jobless recovery through 2005, the Central Area lost 45,000 private-sector jobs. This downward trend was mirrored in the Chicago metropolitan statistical area (MSA) level and across multiple large MSAs, including New York City, Boston and San Francisco.
- In the Central Area, the four employment sectors experiencing growth were: management of companies, education services, healthcare, and accommodations/food service.
- The Central Area's economic recovery was evidenced by an increase of 16,333 private-sector jobs in 2006.

Total private- and public-sector employment in the Central Area is estimated to reach between 600,000 (base case) and 630,000 (opportunity scenario) by 2020. These employment estimates represent an average growth rate of 3,500 to 5,000 jobs per year.

The opportunity scenario, which envisions high growth in office-using employment, reaffirms the Central Area's continued role as the hub of the regional job market. It also assumes investment in infrastructure as recommended in this Plan.

Population Trends and Projections

Highlights of population trends and projections include the following:

- The 2007 population in the Central Area is estimated to have reached 165,500 persons (based on the growth in completed residential units and typical household sizes). Since the 2000 Census count of 111,742, the population has grown by nearly 54,000—an increase of 48%.
- From 2000 to 2007, the Central Area grew at an annual average rate of 5.8%. This compares with an annual growth rate for the Chicago MSA of 0.7% and for the U.S. of 1.0% over the same period.

By 2020, the Central Area population is projected to range from 215,000 to 230,000. This represents an average growth of 4,200 to 5,300 per year.

Work Process

The Economic Development and Land Use (EDLU) Task Force was one of three Task Forces charged with making recommendations to the Steering Committee. At six meetings and numerous work sessions over six months, the EDLU Task Force followed a three step process to review and refine strategies and projects.

First, the Task Force reviewed land use and economic development trends in the Central Area since 2000. The original economic framework was updated with recent trends, current conditions and new 2020 benchmarks.

Second, the Task Force confirmed land use and economic development goals for the Central Area and its twelve planning districts. To help establish priorities, planning districts were ranked according to the degree and intensity of current and projected development and growth, and strategies were created for each. The updated economic framework and visions guided the other two Task Forces (Urban Design and Transportation) in identifying and prioritizing projects.

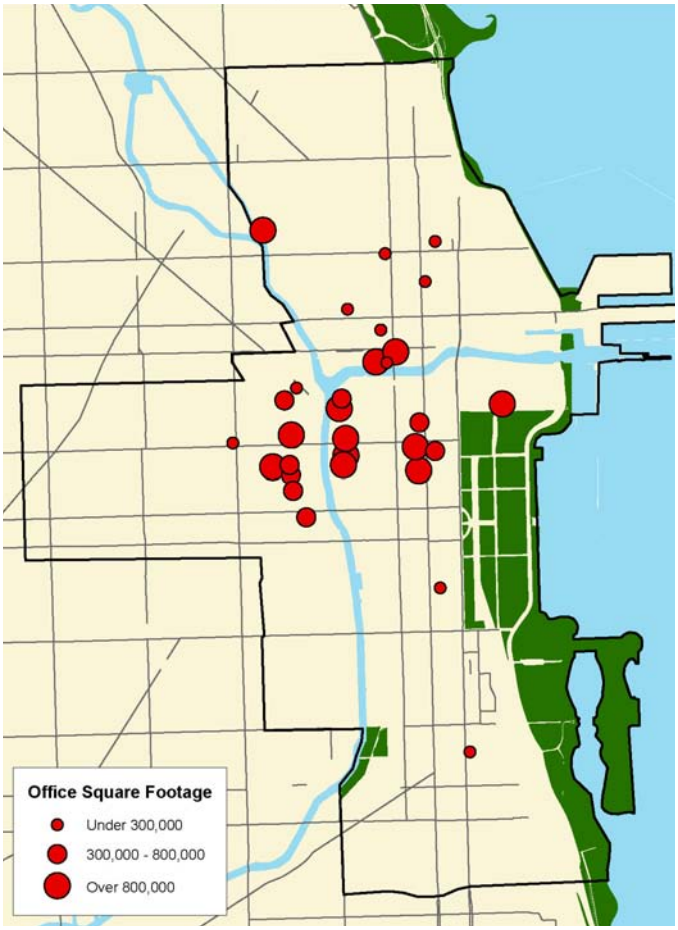
Finally, with consideration of the work of the other two Task Forces, the EDLU Task Force recommended actions and projects to attain nine land use and economic development policy goals. While the Plan looks toward 2020, most of the actions and projects could be implemented in a shorter time frame.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS & PROJECTIONS

Image 1-1: The ABN/Amro Building on Madison was one of numerous new mid-rise office buildings constructed in the West Loop.

Image 1-2: Infill sites in the Central Loop are being developed as Class A office space.

Figure 1-2: Office Development, 2000-2007



Current Office Trends

As of 2007, there were approximately 120 million SF of office space in the Central Area. Highlighted office market trends and conditions include the following:

- As of year-end 2007, the Central Area inventory represented 53.3% of all office space in the Chicago metro area. The Central Area has maintained its office market share in the range of 53% to 55% since 2000.
- The office sector added 15.1 million SF of new space from 2000 to 2007, for an average of 1.9 million SF per year, in line with the 2003 Central Area Plan projections.
- New office development has continued to shift to the west, along Wacker Drive (high density) and to the West Loop (medium density) in proximity to train stations.
- Class C office buildings, particularly on the east side of the Loop, are being converted to residential, hotel and institutional uses.

Office Projections

Office demand between 2000 and 2007 was driven largely by changing technology and user space needs. These trends plus moderate projected increases in business services and other types of office-using employment will generate demand for 700,000 to 1.0 million SF of new office space annually through 2020.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS & PROJECTIONS

Current Residential Trends

As of 2007, there were approximately 102,000 housing units in the Central Area. Highlights of the residential market from 2000 to 2007 include the following:

- An average of 4,180 units were added per year from 2000 to 2007, significantly above the projections in the 2003 Central Area Plan.
- Near South represented the largest share (23%) of residential growth, followed by River North with 22%.
- Near South, with its large remaining inventory of development sites, is expected to capture the largest share of growth through 2020.
- Central Loop is becoming a significant residential area, offering proximity to Millennium Park and Grant Park.
- Developers have responded to increased demand for high-end condominiums, often second homes, from suburban empty-nesters and frequent national and international visitors.
- The conversion of some condominium projects to rental will help more downtown office workers afford walk-to-work housing in the Central Area.

Residential Projections

Even with the onset of a development slowdown, the demand from workers, students, empty-nesters, and others seeking the lifestyle of the Central Area results in projections through 2020 of 2,600 to 3,300 new units per year.

Figure 1-3: Residential Development, 2000-2007 (plus planned)

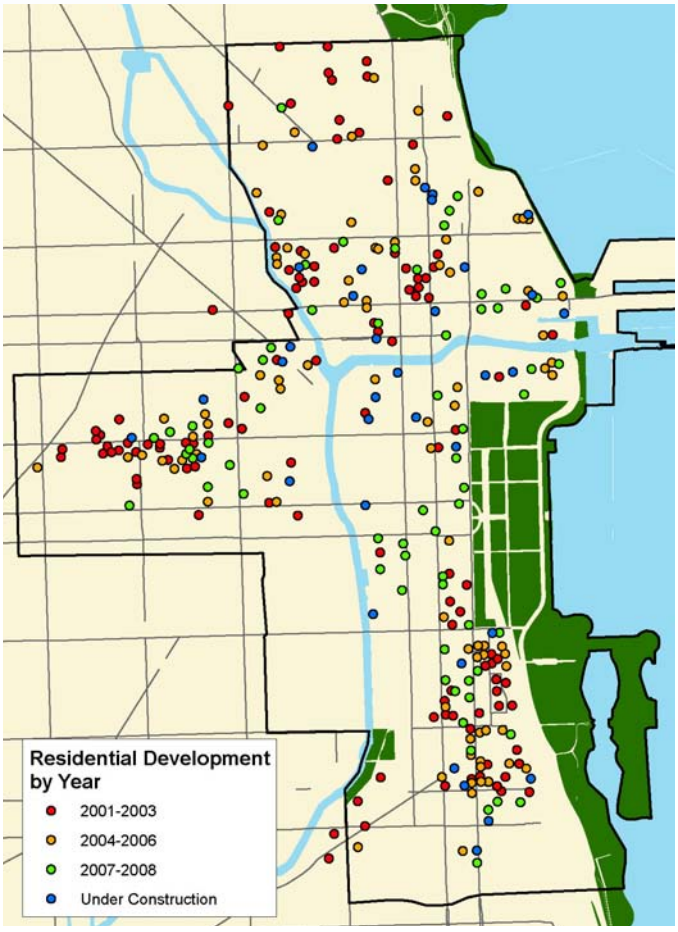


Image 1-3: The Near South is expected to remain the most active Central Area subdistrict for residential development.

Image 1-4: The eastern bank of the North Branch has become a focal point for residential population growth.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS & PROJECTIONS

Figure 1-4: Retail Development, 2000-2007

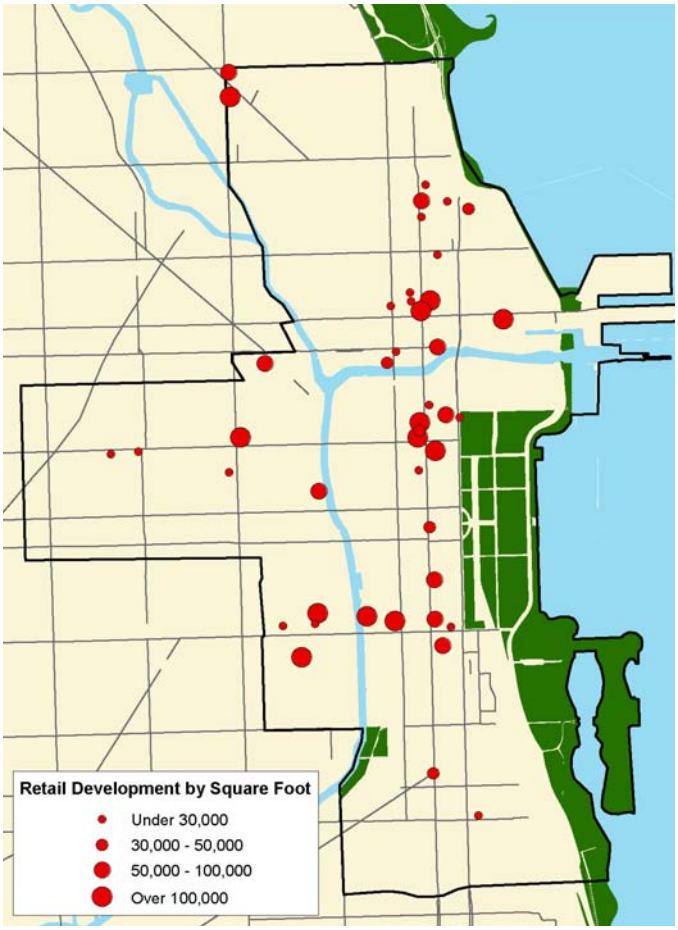


Image 1-5: River East in Streeterville is an example of how new commercial and entertainment venues are being added alongside new residential development.

Image 1-6: The new Target store at Clark Street is part of a growing Roosevelt Road commercial district which feature numerous national retailers.

Current Retail Trends

As of 2007, there were more than 10 million SF of retail space in the Central Area. Retail market trends and conditions include the following:

- New retail development exceeded the 2003 projections due to sustained residential growth, increased tourism traffic since the opening of Millennium Park and heightened interest in Central Area locations by retailers.
- Retail centers added nearly 3.2 million SF from 2000 to 2007, or an annual average of 395,000 SF per year.
- In addition, 75,000 SF per year was added in ground floor non-retail projects, providing neighborhood and convenience retail for residents and workers.
- Residential demand has driven big box retail development along Roosevelt Road and at infill sites in the North and Clybourn area.
- Eight new grocery stores have opened since 2000, with more under construction and in planning to serve the growing residential population.
- Tourists now account for over 50% of retail demand on North Michigan Avenue.
- Millennium Park tourism and an expanding student population have strengthened State Street. Completion of the 108 North State (Block 37) retail and entertainment complex, along with growth in the downtown workforce, will further bolster State Street.

Retail Projections

Retail demand will be driven by increased numbers of residents, visitors, students and workers. The Central Area is projected to add between 200,000 and 300,000 SF annually for all types of retail space.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS & PROJECTIONS

Current Hotel/Tourism Trends

As of 2007, there were nearly 31,000 hotel rooms in the Central Area. Hotel market trends include the following:

- The hotel market made a robust recovery from the impact of 9/11, with reinvestment in existing properties, adaptive reuse projects, and new construction.
- The improved performance of the hotel market is indicated by a 75.5% occupancy rate in 2007, up from 67.4% in 2006
- With Millennium Park's success as an attraction, hotel development is shifting south of the River.
- More than 4,000 hotel rooms were added between 2000 and 2007, an average of 540 per year.
- In the current downturn, additional rooms are under construction, but several planned projects have been cancelled or put on hold.

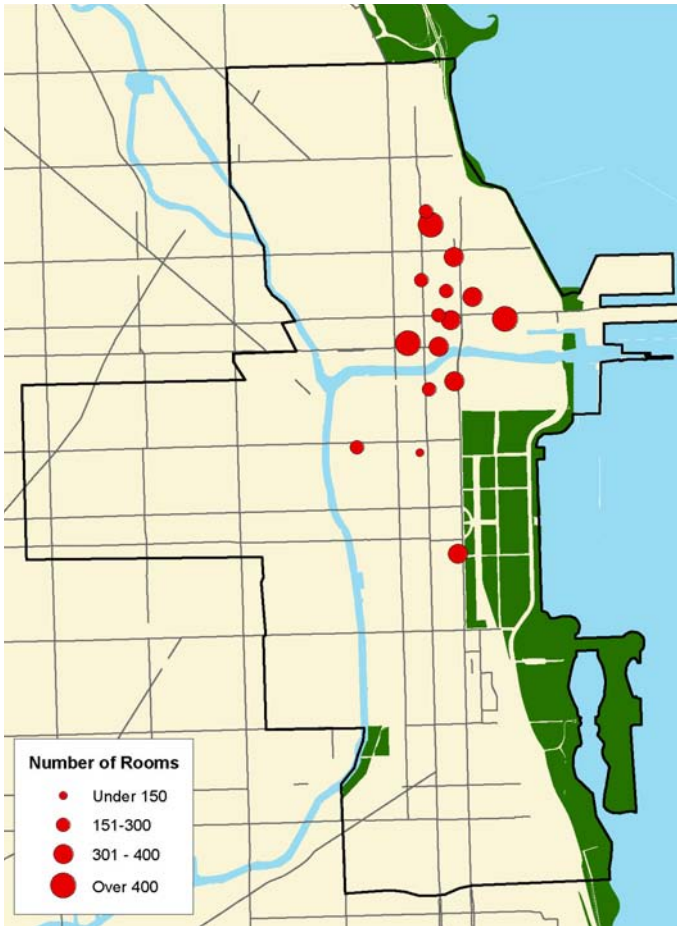
Hotel/Tourism Projections

The forecast going forward shows 500 to 700 new rooms per year to accommodate business travel, the new McCormick Place West and increased weekend visitation. Significant new hotel development is anticipated in the vicinity of the McCormick Place campus, particularly along Cermak Road.

Image 1-7: Millennium Park continues to have a strong impact on residential and hotel development in the Central Area.

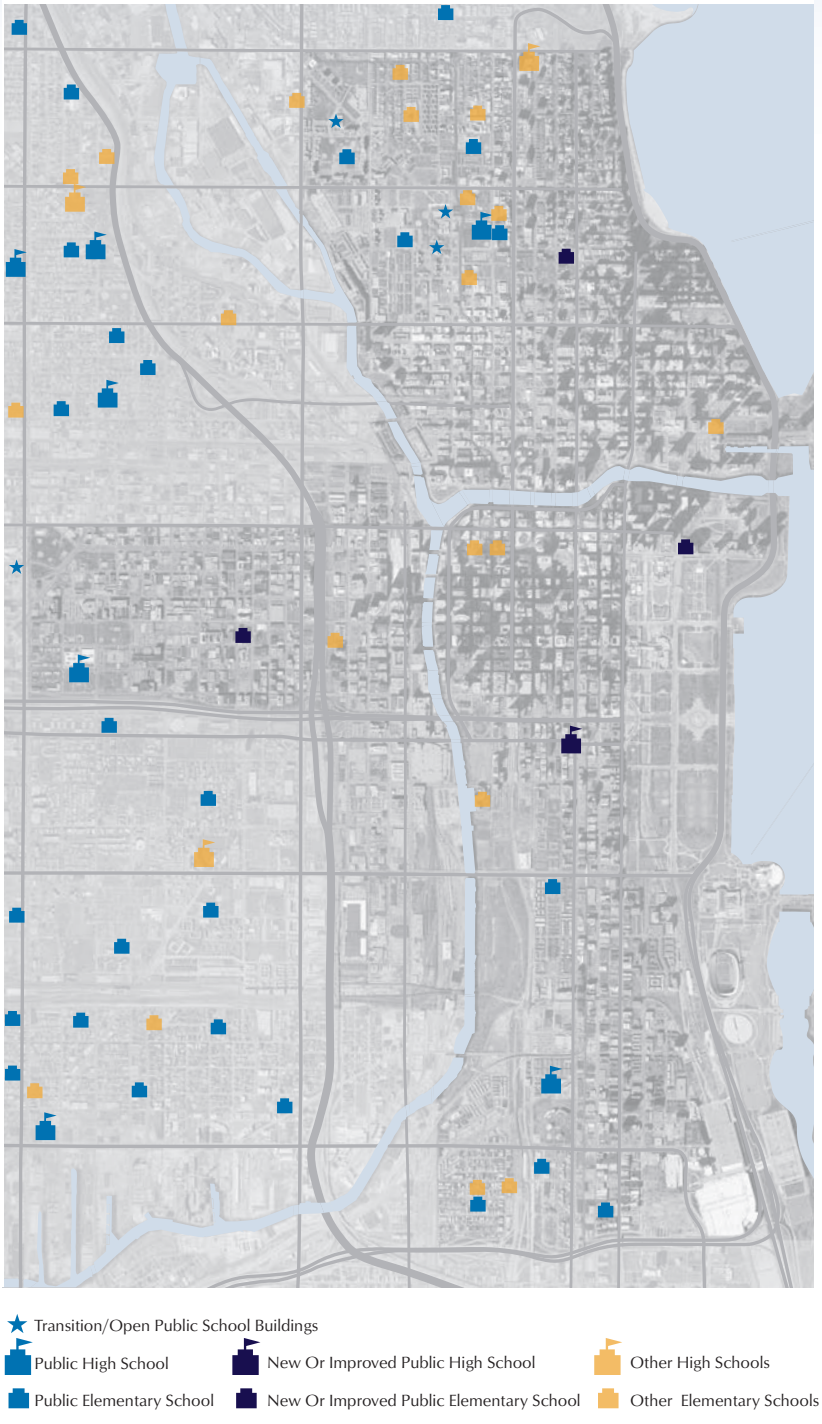
Image 1-8: New hotel chains, such as Sofitel, are entering the Chicago market for the first time due to an increase in tourist visits.

Figure 1-5: Hotel Development, 2000-2007



DEVELOPMENT TRENDS & PROJECTIONS

Figure 1-6: Central Area Schools (Planned and Existing)


Transition/Open Public School Buildings
Public High School
New Or Improved Public High School
Other High Schools
Public Elementary School
New Or Improved Public Elementary School
Other Elementary Schools

Current Institutional Trends

The institutional market, with its subcategories of education, arts/culture and healthcare, was a strong contributor to growth in the Central Area from 2000 to 2007. Major institutional trends include the following:

- The healthcare sector, particularly at the Northwestern Campus in Streeterville, continued to expand with the opening of major facilities such as the Lurie Research Center and Prentice Women's Hospital.
- Numerous university-related facilities opened, including new classrooms and dormitory developments for Columbia College, DePaul University, and Roosevelt University in the South Loop.
- Elementary and high schools also invested in new or upgraded facilities across the Central Area. These included new public school facilities such as the National Teacher's Academy on Cermak.
- The Theater District expanded with the addition of the new Goodman Theater and the renovation of the former Schubert Theater, which reopened as the Bank of America Theater.
- The Art Institute of Chicago is completing a major addition.

Institutional Projections

The institutional sector is projected to continue its steady expansion. Particular areas for continued growth include the medical concentration in Streeterville (including the new Children's Memorial Hospital) and new schools to serve the Central Area's growing population.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE GOALS

The land use and economic development recommendations are summarized under nine comprehensive goals below. For each of these goals, specific projects and regulatory actions are presented. Together, they create a strategy for a multi-year implementation program.

The result is a multi-year public and private investment program of $15.55 billion, organized around the following implementation policies.

Maintain Chicago's Position as the Economic Engine of the Region and State

- Maintain the Central Area's majority share of regional office growth by continued investment in transit.
- Consider changes to zoning ordinances to enhance the distinction between the Downtown Core (DC) and Mixed Use (DX) districts to more strongly support the City's preference for office development in the Central Loop and West Loop, such as designating residential as a special use in DC and increasing residential minimum lot area (MLA) requirements.
- Expedite upgrades in the information and communication infrastructure (such as wireless broadband) that are essential to compete in the global marketplace.
- Leverage the CBOT/CME merger and the new LaSalle Central TIF to revitalize south LaSalle Street and expand Chicago's role in national and international finance.
- Focus investments toward cultural, healthcare and educational institutions that enhance the business environment, promote visitation and expand the job base.
- Protect existing Downtown Service (DS) areas to ensure a place for back office and service functions that support downtown business.
- Assist and collaborate on public/private ventures that support educational institutions, such as links between businesses and schools.

Support Dense Residential Growth to Enhance Urban Vibrancy and Utilize the Urban Infrastructure

- Protect existing densities, affirming the 2004 Chicago Zoning Ordinance that developed Downtown Districts in support of the 2003 Central Area Plan.
- Maintain the supply and building capacity of remaining sites to enable the growth projections upon which the Plan is premised.
- Implement performance standards addressing factors such as noise and waste management to mitigate conflicts from mixes of residential with other uses.
- Encourage a range of housing choices, including workforce housing, to serve a diverse employment base.
- Build and improve schools and recreation facilities to support residential growth, using significant TIF contributions as needed.
- Pursue the highest standards of urban design, continuing streetscape, park, trail and public art projects in recognition of their contribution to quality of life.

Implement Cutting-Edge Environmental Practices and Green Building Techniques

- Employ Smart Growth principles in land use and transportation planning in the Central Area—the strongest location in the region to demonstrate their efficacy.
- Maximize densities in high-use corridors and around transit lines to create a walkable environment,

Image 1-9: Key sites in the Central Loop and West Loop should be reserved for employment-supporting office development.

Image 1-10: The Central Area will maintain its position as the primary cultural, recreational and tourism district for the region.

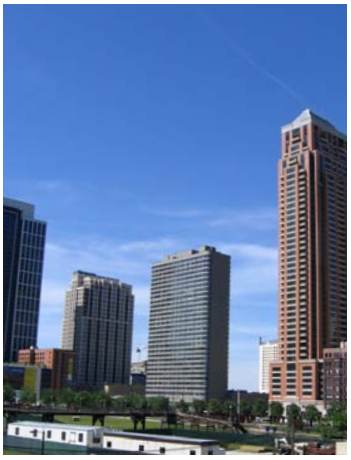


Image 1-11: The Central Area will continue to add dense, urban-scale residential units.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE GOALS

Image 1-12: The Riverfront and Lakefront areas will become continuous pedestrian and open space corridors.

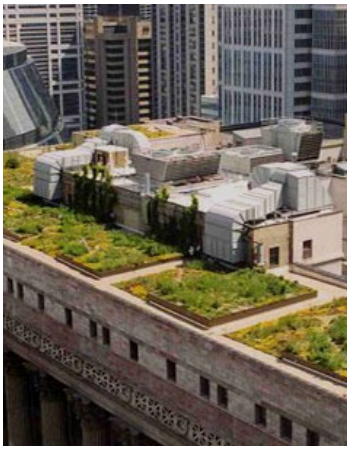


Image 1-13: Programs that strengthen green building practices will be encouraged in the Central Area.

Image 1-14: Improvements at Union Station will reinforce its role as a major gateway to the Central Area.

promote public transit use and leverage public investment.
- Increase energy efficiency and conservation by upgrading building codes incrementally to reach LEED Silver and Gold standards.
- Make infrastructure development sustainable by reducing material consumption through the use of recycled materials and by minimizing negative environmental impacts, such as stormwater runoff.
- Transition the CTA and other public vehicles to low-emission standards and alternative fuels.

Enhance Parks, Corridors and Waterfronts for Residents, Workers, Students, and Visitors

- Set the highest standards for urban design as an essential ingredient in "bonding people to a place."
- Expand the park impact fee program to create sufficient park space for new residents.
- Implement the park, waterfront and streetscape/corridor recommendations of the Urban Design Task Force.
- Prioritize completion of the Riverwalk system as an amenity to support Central Area shopping, employment, and cultural facilities, beginning with the Main Branch (Lake Shore Drive to Franklin Avenue).
- Expand the Lakefront Trail and parkland between Navy Pier and North Avenue to fill missing gap in Lakefront park system.

Better Connect to the World through O'Hare and Midway Airports as well as the Regional Rail Network

- Connect the Central Area to O'Hare and Midway regional airports with direct, express train service, building on investments by the City and CTA, and attracting private involvement.
- Continue O'Hare expansion and Midway improvement programs.
- Reaffirm Chicago Union Station's status as a prime gateway into the Central Area by reinvesting in intermodal facilities; improving station access and wayfinding; and supporting expansion and enhancements to Amtrak service.

Strengthen Chicago's ties to the North American Economy through Efficient Freight Delivery

- Protect Chicago's role as the largest inland international container port in North America.
- Fully support all state and federal initiatives to implement the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE), a menu of railroad enhancements to maintain Chicago's global freight competitiveness.
- Reduce conflicts with Metra trains to ensure rush-hour passenger capacity and efficient freight movement.
- Channel freight rail traffic to corridors outside the Central Area.
- Continue viaduct and roadway improvements to rail, truck and intermodal locations.
- Improve the efficiency and minimize impacts of freight delivery by requiring off-peak hours, encouraging loading zone management and implementing other recommendations of CDOT's Downtown Freight Study (2007).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE GOALS

Invest in Transit to Support the Growth Envisioned by the Plan

- Invest in transit to support the growth projections in the Plan, particularly for employment and office space.
- Implement the transit, roadway, and related improvement recommendations of the Action Plan.
- Give first priority to Metra and CTA rush-hour/commuter capacity enhancements. For CTA, this includes upgrading information systems; modernizing stations; adding stations in growing residential areas; and extending rail lines to allow more workers to commute to the Central Area via public transit. For Metra, this includes expanding service capacity, including lengthening platforms at the downtown stations and expanding parking and transit-oriented development at suburban stations; assisting intermodal upgrades at LaSalle and Union Stations; and continuing improvements along the Electric Line.
- Create a new system of dedicated Transitways to serve high growth and high density centers.

Frame a City/State/Federal Capital Investment Plan Supplemented by Private Participation

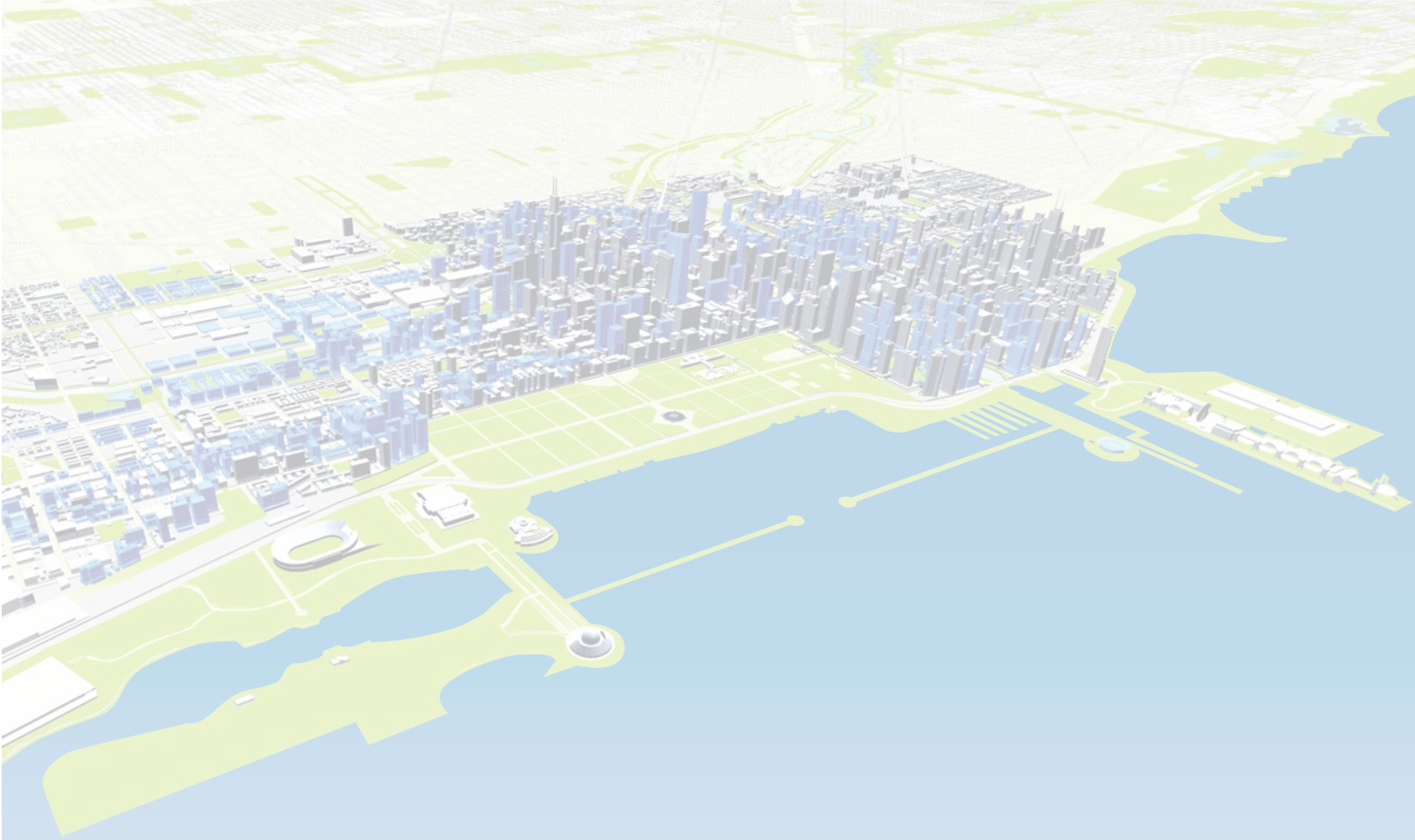
- Launch a campaign to educate residents and business leaders on the benefits of a long-term capital investment in the Central Area as the driver of the region's growth.
- The established TIF districts will remain essential and should be protected, coordinated, expanded, extended as feasible and otherwise creatively and aggressively utilized to insure a secure funding base and redevelopment framework.
- Dedicate the majority of TIF and related funding to the long-term capital projects identified in the Action Plan.
- Use TIF immediately as seed capital to initiate plans for key transportation and corridor improvements.
- Although market conditions support most development projects, selectively use site-specific incentives where there are significant public benefits.
- Pool tax increment income from all the contiguous TIF districts for significant area-wide projects.
- Update revenue projections of all TIFs using the base growth projections of this Plan.
- Issue general obligation bonds pledged against future TIF revenues to fund capital projects.
- Enable improvement districts in neighborhoods and commercial districts that will fund new services and capital projects.
- Identify the local match requirements for key transportation projects and ensure it is designated.
- Present the prioritized project list to RTA, Metra and CTA to be included in state and federal transportation budgets.
- Support increased capital spending from the federal and state governments, and utilize public-private partnerships as appropriate to leverage public dollars to achieve capital projects.

Incorporate the Central Area Action Plan into the Regional Transportation Plan, McCormick Place Planning and State and Federal Capital Programs

- Hold to the principles of sustainable development, compact growth, transit oriented design and smart growth by maintaining the Central Area as the economic core of the region.
- Facilitate funding with a regional approach that coordinates the efforts of the City, Counties and the State of Illinois, with the Action Plan as a core element.
- Join with long-term planning efforts for McCormick Place and the surrounding district to support those projects that would provide long-term benefits to the City.

Image 1-15: Better use of existing transportation infrastructure, such as the Lakefront busway, will improve mobility within the Central Area.

Image 1-16: Recent expansion of McCormick Place will drive the need for improved facilities for business visitors.



Chapter 2
Transportation

TRANSPORTATION FINDINGS

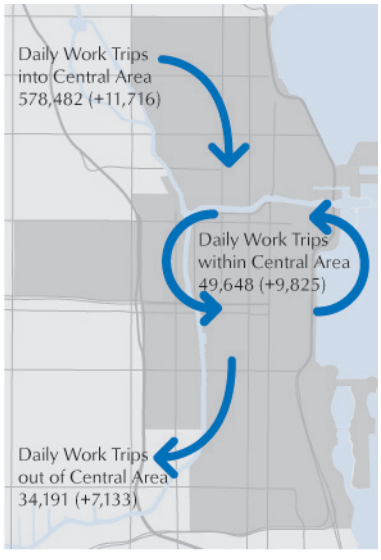
The Central Area is the primary employment center of the region. This, along with the development of new cultural and educational facilities and nearly a decade of unprecedented growth in residential development, has resulted in significant increases in trips into and within the Central Area. In addition, numerous completed or under-construction projects have changed transportation patterns in the Central Area. This is reflected in the most updated transportation and ridership data. These findings and project updates are summarized on the following pages and provide the basis for the conclusions and recommendations in this Plan.

Central Area Trends

Central Area Work Trips

During the 1990s, work trips into, out of, and within the Central Area increased. Daily work trips within the Central Area grew by 25% to nearly 50,000.

Figure 2-1: Central Area Work Trips
Year 2000 (Change from 1990)



Source: U.S. Census

As of the 2000 Census, over 578,000 people traveled into the Central Area to work each weekday. More than half of these people (52%) used transit.

While the Central Loop and West Loop contain the most employment and the highest share of transit riders, single-occupancy vehicles provided access to the majority of jobs in the South Loop, Near South, Near West and Near North districts. Each of these districts contains a growing number of jobs.

CTA Ridership

Total weekday boardings at Central Area CTA rail stations grew during the early 2000s, reaching an average of more than 200,000 per day. The stations with the most boardings in the Central Area are Clark/Lake (Blue, Loop elevated), Chicago (Red), Jackson (Red), Lake (Red), and Grand (Red).

Comparing 2001 with 2006 data, the CTA rail segments with the highest increases in weekday ridership include the Blue Line between LaSalle Street and UIC-Halsted (+41%) and the Red Line between Harrison Street and Cermak Road (+35%). These correspond with the neighborhoods experiencing the significant residential development during the same time period.

There are nearly as many bus boardings in the Central Area as rail, with an average of more than 160,000 per weekday (this has grown in recent years). The routes with the highest average boardings within the Central Area are:

- Route 151 - Sheridan
- Route 20 - Madison
- Route 66 - Chicago
- Route 29 - State
- Route 156 - LaSalle

Work Process

The Transportation Task Force, a group of transportation professionals, business leaders and agency representatives working in the Central Area, reviewed and helped to better define the strategies and projects envisioned by the 2003 Plan. In a series of four meetings over six months, the Task Force updated development and transportation trends, reviewed the set of transportation goals and needs, and conducted a comprehensive rating exercise of the project options for the Central Area.

The results of the rating process were used to offer guidance on the priority projects and implementation strategies needed to accomplish the growth and improvement goals of the Plan.

Metra Ridership

Weekday ridership on the Metra system grew by 14% overall between 2003 and 2008, reaching an average of more than 325,000 trips systemwide.

Roughly three-quarters of all Metra trips are peak period/peak direction (i.e., a.m. inbound, p.m. outbound), but there has been growth in the proportion of reverse commute, midday, and evening trips.

Most Metra trips either begin or end at one of the Central Area terminals. More than 163,000 passengers travel to a Central Area station on an average weekday.

Union Station remains the busiest station in the Metra system. Each weekday more than 54,000 people use the station to reach the Central Area.

TRANSPORTATION FINDINGS

Amtrak Ridership

Ridership at Chicago Union Station reached over 3.1 million during fiscal year 2008, an increase of more than 50% since 2002.

Overall ridership levels are up on each of the train lines in Illinois. In particular, increases in service levels in the St. Louis and Milwaukee corridors have driven corresponding ridership increases on these lines.

River North Resident and Office Worker Surveys

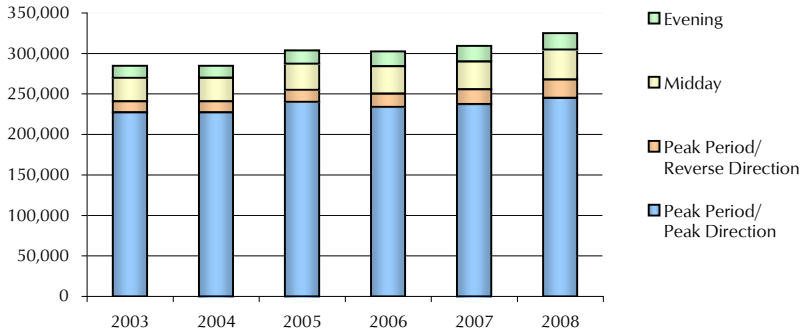
More than two-thirds (68%) of the residents surveyed as part of the 2007 River North Multimodal Analysis work within the district that would be served by the Carroll Avenue Transitway. Forty percent claimed that the proposed Transitway project would lead to a high or very-high increase in their transit usage.

Thirteen percent of the office workers surveyed lived in the immediate area. Thirty-two percent claimed that the project would lead to a high or very-high increase in their transit usage.

Both residents and office workers rank the same factors as the most important to increasing their transit usage:

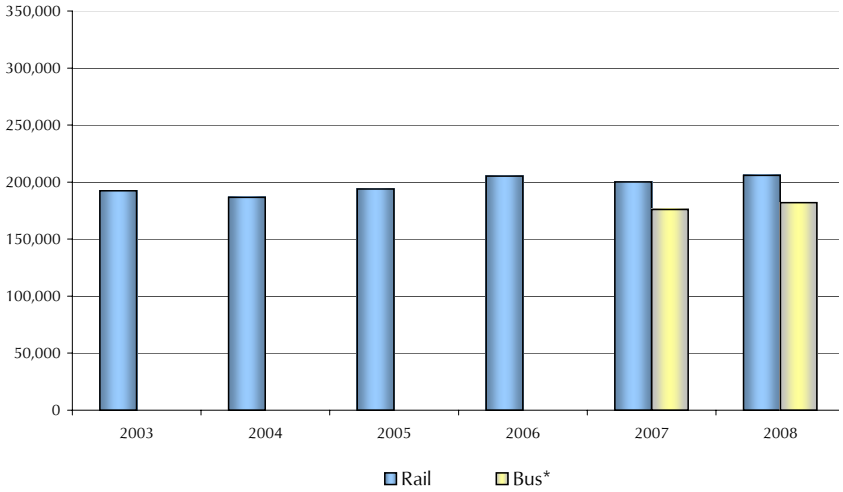
- Increased service frequency;
- Reduced travel time; and
- More convenient routes.

Figure 2-2: Metra System Ridership
Average Weekday



Source: Metra Ridership Reports

Figure 2-3: Central Area Station Boardings
Average Weekday



** Detailed bus boarding data unavailable prior to 2007*

Source: CTA

PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

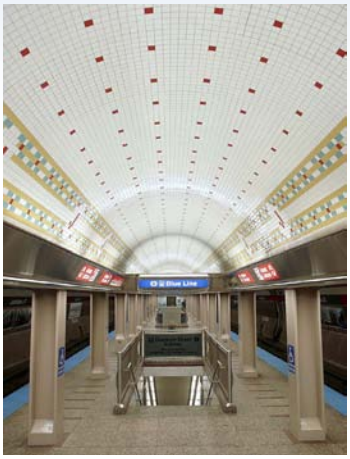


Image 2-1: Jackson/State/Dearborn CTA Subway Station Modernization

Image 2-2: Metra Millennium (Randolph) Station Modernization

Image 2-3: Washington Street Streetscape

The 2003 Central Area Plan identified a range of transportation projects. Progress has been made on many of these projects, described as follows.

Completed Projects (2001-2006)

Rapid Transit Station Modernization: This CDOT program continues to upgrade key CTA rapid transit stations in the Central Area, creating a more pleasant and functional environment for transit customers. Upgrading stations to include ADA-compliant access is also included. Station upgrades in the Central Area since 2001 include:

- Lake/State
- Jackson/State/Dearborn
- Chicago/State

Metra Millennium (Randolph) Station Modernization: The terminal station for the Metra Electric and South Shore commuter rail lines was upgraded to include new access and Pedway connections.

Metra North Central Service (NCS) Expansion, Union Pacific-West and Southwest Service Line Extensions: Metra has continued to expand its service levels and regional coverage area. Recent upgrades of the NCS increased the number of daily trains into Chicago Union Station, and extension projects were recently completed on the Southwest Service to Manhattan and the Union Pacific-West Line to Elburn. Service levels were also expanded on the Southwest Service, increasing the number of trains from 15 to 30 per day.

CTA Pink Line Upgrades: An upgrade of this elevated branch on the City's west side was completed in 2005, with new stations and expanded train capacity to the Loop.

Streetscape and Lighting Program: CDOT's Streetscape and Lighting Program has primarily targeted pedestrian streets in the Central Loop, expanding and upgrading sidewalks and crosswalks, as well as installing decorative lighting, street plantings and furniture. Recently completed streets include:

- Washington Street
- Randolph Street

East Wacker Drive Reconstruction: Both levels of Wacker Drive were reconstructed between Michigan Avenue and Lake Street to include improved traffic operations and more public open space adjacent to the River. (*Note: A second phase is planned for the north-south portion of Wacker, south of Lake Street*)

Installation of Signal Interconnects and Cameras: Interconnected signals enable the City to coordinate traffic movements on the existing street grid and improve traffic flow. Recent installations have been completed in the Loop and River North, and installations are underway in Streeterville and the West Loop.

Riverwalk Expansion: The reconstruction of Wacker Drive and continued residential development along the North branch of the Chicago River have allowed for the construction of portions of the Riverwalk through these areas.

Millennium Park Bicycle Station: The new bicycle station at Millennium Park includes parking and locker facilities for commuters. The success of this station indicates the need for additional bicycle commuter stations in other portions of the Central Area.

PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Projects Under Construction or Nearing Completion (2007-2008)

Rapid Transit Station Modernization: Reconstruction of the CTA Grand/State Red Line subway station began in 2008.

Streetscape and Lighting Program: Projects underway include Wabash Avenue (from Wacker Dr. to Roosevelt Road), Michigan Avenue (from Roosevelt Rd. to 24th Place), and DesPlaines Street (from Roosevelt Rd. to Polk St.).

Metra Roosevelt Station: The Metra Electric and NICTD South Shore Line station located at the south end of Grant Park is being rebuilt by CDOT to improve aesthetics and accessibility.

CTA Brown Line Reconstruction: The ongoing reconstruction of the Brown Line will improve stations along the line and expand capacity for eight-car trains.

Airport Express Terminal: A transit terminal at 108 North State (northwest corner of State and Washington) is the future location of dedicated express service to O'Hare and Midway Airports.

LaSalle Station Intermodal Center: A bus loading area adjacent to Metra's LaSalle Street Station at Congress Parkway and Financial Place will allow easier transfers to CTA bus routes downtown.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Planning: In 2008, the City of Chicago and CTA began planning improved bus service in key corridors using dedicated lanes, signal-priority and faster boarding technology. The pilot corridors included Halsted and Chicago Avenues in the Central Area. The City continues to explore other potential corridors.

Image 2-4: Expansion of the Riverwalk System - New Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Wabash Plaza

Images 2-5 and 2-6: CTA Rapid Transit Station Modernization Grand/State Subway

Image 2-7: BRT planning efforts have identified key bus corridors for service upgrades, including Halsted and Chicago Avenues.

GOALS AND NEEDS

The 2003 Central Area Plan established the major theme of an accessible, connected Central Area and defined a set of key goals for transportation in the Central Area. The Transportation Task Force took these goals as the starting point for the Action Plan, and worked to establish key needs for each goal and to help prioritize the proposed transportation projects. The key needs related to each goal are outlined below.

Improve Transit in Central Area

- *Serve the growth in trips:* Daily trips into the Central Area continue to grow; as residential growth accelerates, the fastest growing trip types are those which both start and end within the Central Area.
- *Improved transit system coverage:* While the existing system serves the Loop, portions of the Central Area lack access to rapid transit, in particular Streeterville, Near South and Near West.
- *Improved service options in key* growth districts: Many districts continue to grow due to transit access, others grow despite poor transit access. Investments in the system should target locations with projected high employment densities (e.g., West Loop) and high residential densities (e.g., Streeterville).

Increase Regional Transit Capacity

- *Improved system capacity and reliability:* Maintain and enhance high-capacity transit options for the economic viability of a dense and growing Central Area.
- *Creating a more extensive rapid-transit network:* Capture opportunities to extend and expand direct connections to the Central Area along the rapid transit rail network.
- *Connecting to regional growth areas:* Keep pace with regional growth and development patterns by improving or adding transit service in key suburban corridors.

Improve Pedestrian Environment

- *Improved on-street environment:* Identify and improve key pedestrian corridors using CDOT streetscape and lighting program, focus on signature east-west streets and linkage of key destinations.
- *Improved off-street environment:* There are numerous opportunities to connect to the off-street trail network, in particular along the Lakefront and Riverfront.
- *Serve growth in transit trips:* The growth in transit trips translates into a growing number of pedestrians walking to their final destination and highlights the need for pedestrian improvements around the busiest transit stations in the Central Area.

Manage Traffic Circulation

- *Improved roadway efficiency:* Maximize the efficiency of the existing grid network in the Central Area.
- *Connected grid network:* Reinforce the grid system to connect existing gaps, for example, along the River on the south side.
- *Improved safety and security:* Safeguard the assets of the Central Area by ensuring mobility during major events and reducing hazardous conditions.

Encourage Alternative Modes

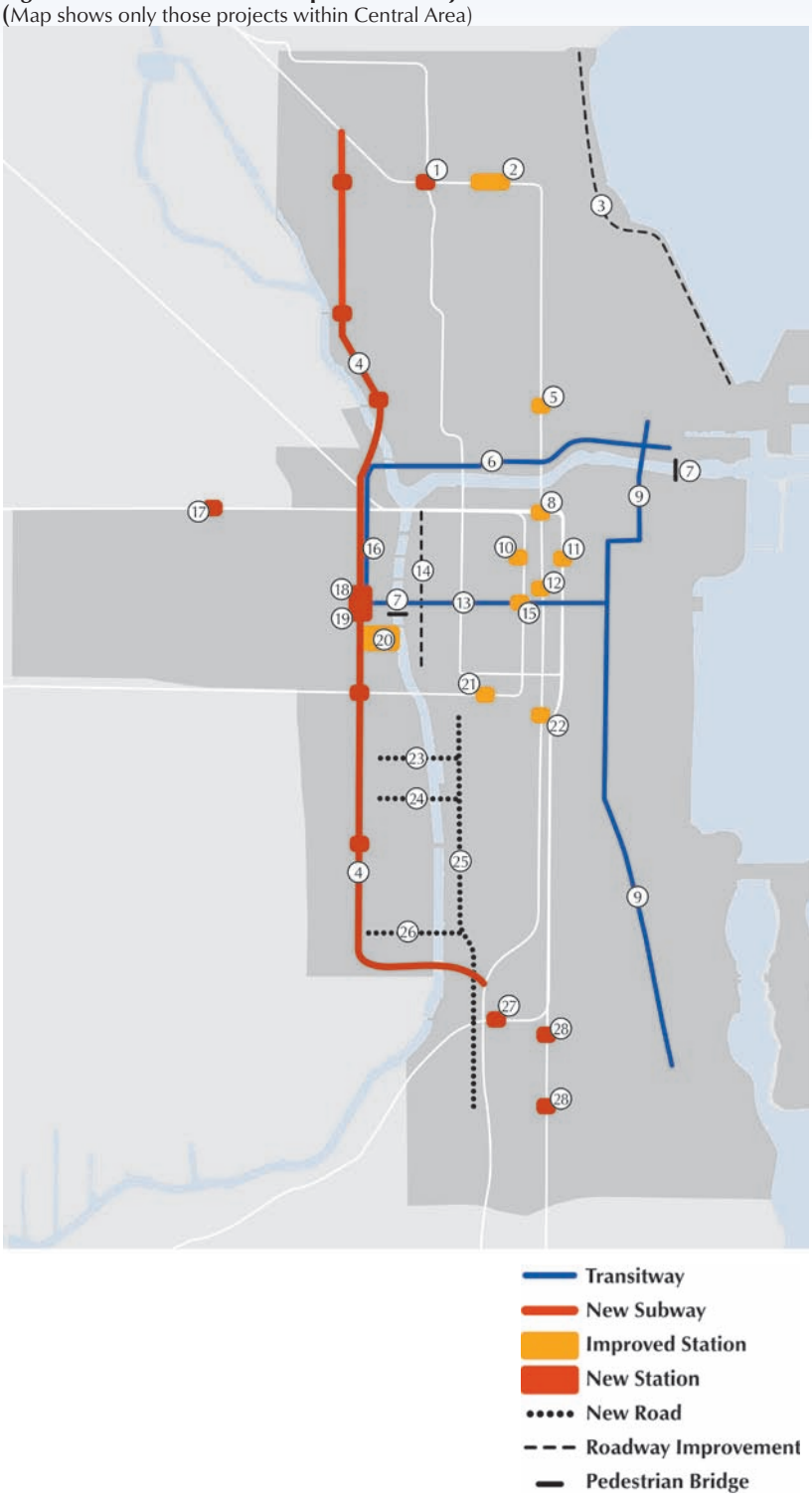
- *Connected off-street bicycle network:* Build upon the existing network of trails and greenways in the Central Area to create a system connecting waterfronts and open space assets.
- *Improved on-street bicycle network:* Improve the safety of on-street routes for bicycles in the Central Area by creating consistent street lanes and markings.
- *Exploring other alternative mode options:* Create alternative commuting options for Central Area residents, including the expansion of water taxi services and docks.

Improve National & International Connections

- *Expanded regional high-speed rail network:* Build service levels and reliability to continue growth in daily intercity rail passengers from throughout the Midwest, with Chicago as the central hub for high-speed rail investments.
- *Improved access to airports:* Improve the attractiveness of Central Area as a hub of national business with faster and more efficient connections to airport.

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Figure 2-4: Central Area Transportation Projects
(Map shows only those projects within Central Area)



Central Area Project Key

1. CTA Infill Station (Division – Brown/Purple)
2. Station Modernization (Clark/Division)
3. North Lake Shore Drive Improvements
4. Clinton Subway
5. Station Modernization (Grand)
6. Carroll Avenue Transitway
7. Pedestrian Bridges
8. Station Modernization (State/Lake)
9. Lakefront Transitway
10. Station Modernization (Washington)
11. Station Modernization (Washington/Wabash)
12. Station Modernization (Monroe)
13. East-West (Monroe) Transitway
14. Wacker Drive Enhancements
15. Station Modernization (Monroe)
16. Clinton Transitway
17. CTA Infill Station (Morgan –Green/Pink)
18. West Loop Bicycle Station
19. West Loop Transportation Center
20. Union Station Upgrades
21. Station Modernization (LaSalle)
22. Station Modernization (Harrison)
23. Polk Street Bridge
24. Taylor Street Bridge
25. Wells–Wentworth Connector
26. 16th Street Bridge
27. CTA Infill Station (Cermak or 18th –Green)
28. CTA Infill Station (Clark/18th – Orange)

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Central Area Transit

Image 2-8: Concept for the proposed Carroll Avenue Transitway through River North.

Carroll Avenue Transitway

Project Description: A limited-stop transit service travelling east-west along existing right-of-way at the north edge of the Chicago River; would improve connections between West Loop, River North and Streeterville.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2012

Next Steps:

- Alternatives Analysis Study
- Preliminary Engineering
- Project Design & Construction

Implementation Considerations:

- Examine creation of stations in partnership with building owners
- Incorporate bus terminals, turnarounds, and idling areas into design
- Examine benefits of low-emission vehicles & guidance systems
- Explore use of Lower Wacker as alternative

Potential Funding Sources: FTA New Starts/Small Starts (up to 80%); State/local bonds; TIFs and other taxing districts; Public/private

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $260,000,000

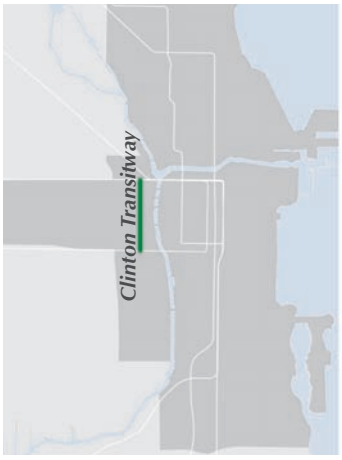


Image 2-9: The Clinton Transitway will connect the north and south ends of the West Loop.

Clinton Street Transitway

Project Description: North-south connection to Carroll Avenue Transitway would travel beneath Clinton Street south of Lake with station-stops at the adjacent Metra commuter terminals.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2012

Next Steps:

- Examine this segment as a part of the Carroll Ave Transitway study
- Project Design & Construction

Implementation Considerations:

- Would eventually form upper level of West Loop Transportation Center
- Incorporate bus terminals, turnarounds and idling areas into design

Potential Funding Sources: FTA New Starts/Small Starts (up to 80%); State/local bonds; TIFs and other taxing districts; Public/private

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $60,000,000

Image 2-10: The Lakefront Transitway will utilize the existing busway through Grant Park.

Lakefront Transitway

Project Description: Using an existing, improved right-of-way travelling north-south through Grant Park, this transit service would provide a connection between Near South and Streeterville.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2016

Next Steps:

- Conduct Feasibility Study for rapid transit service operating in corridor
- Perform Alternatives Analysis, Preliminary Engineering and Project Design.

Implementation Considerations:

- Right-of-way currently utilized by shuttle buses accessing McCormick Place

Potential Funding Sources: FTA New Starts/Small Starts (up to 80%); State/local bonds; TIFs and other taxing districts; Public/private

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $150,000,000

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

East-West Transitway (Monroe)

Project Description: A grade-separated east-west transitway through the heart of the Central Loop beneath Monroe Street, connecting the West Loop rail terminals with the Central Business District and Lakefront recreation areas.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2016

Next Steps:

- Conduct Feasibility Study for rapid transit service operating in corridor.
- Perform Alternatives Analysis, Preliminary Engineering and Project Design

Implementation Considerations:

- Service would operate in space between street level and subway services.
- Construction likely to involve major short-term disruptions to Loop.

Potential Funding Sources: FTA New Starts/Small Starts (up to 80%); State/local bonds; TIFs and other taxing districts; Public/private

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $200,000,000

Image 2-11: The East-West Transitway would travel below street level but above the subway lines.

CTA Infill Stations

Project Description: Create new infill stations along existing rail lines, targeting subdistricts with limited access to system.

Implementation Goal: Four new Central Area stations by 2020.

- Morgan (Green/Pink): 2008-2012
- Cermak or 18th (Green): 2012-2016
- Division (Brown/Purple): 2012-2016
- Clark/18th Station (Orange): 2016-2020

Next Steps:

- Design and construction (Morgan Station)
- Feasibility studies (other stations)

Implementation Considerations:

- Station at Clark/18th may be constructed as transfer station for Circle Line trains
- Additional future stations may need to be considered at other infill locations

Potential Funding Sources: Federal Capital Funds (up to 80%); CMAQ; State/local bonds; TIF and other taxing districts

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $60,000,000 per station

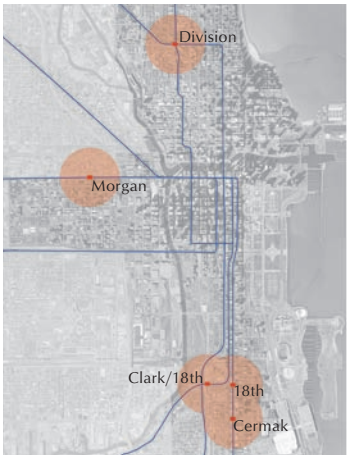


Image 2-12: Additional CTA rail stations along existing lines in the Central Area will improve access in growing residential areas.

CTA Station Modernization

Project Description: Targeted upgrades of existing stations to improve the comfort and accessibility of high-usage stations.

Implementation Goal: Ongoing program plans renovations for nine stations by 2020:

- Grand/State (Red)
- Clark/Division (Red)
- Madison/State (Red)
- Washington/Dearborn (Blue)
- Washington/Wabash (Loop Elevated)
- State/Lake (Loop Elevated)
- Harrison/State (Red)
- Monroe/Dearborn (Blue)
- LaSalle/Congress (Blue)

Implementation Considerations:

- The Washington/Wabash Station would replace two existing Loop stations (Randolph and Madison)
- Upgrades to additional stations, including all elevated Loop stations, are expected to continue beyond 2020

Potential Funding Sources: CMAQ; State/local bonds; TIFs and other taxing districts

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $90,000,000 per station

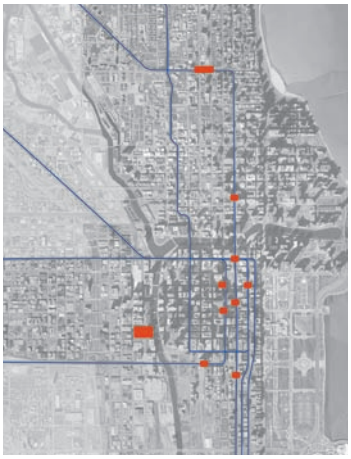


Image 2-13: A number of existing CTA stations are programmed for upgrades.

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Central Area Transit *(continued)*

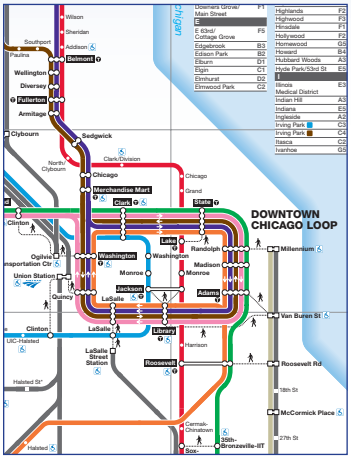


Image 2-14: Improved information signs and displays can help increase transit ridership among infrequent system users.

Transit/Passenger Information Systems

Project Description: Improved, consistent program for static signage and dynamic passenger information across all modes.

Implementation Goal: Ongoing program at all Central Area stations (2008 - 2016)

Next Steps:

- Support RTA efforts to coordinate among CDOT, CTA and Metra
- Track and report progress through customer surveys

Implementation Considerations:

- Project could be combined with others, e.g., CTA station modernization or Union Station upgrades
- A key project for boosting transit usage among tourists and other new/infrequent customers
- RTA has conducted pilot program and evaluated needs at key transfer points

Potential Funding Sources: CMAQ; TIF and other taxing districts

City Role: Partner with RTA and CTA

Cost Estimate: $20,000,000

Image 2-15: A four-level transportation center will facilitate transfers between transit services meeting in the West Loop.

West Loop Transportation Center

Project Description: Four-level intermodal transfer center in the West Loop (located beneath Clinton) would connect commuter/intercity rail, CTA rapid transit and Central Area transitways.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2016

Next Steps:

- Protect right-of-way for space
- Work with transit partners (CTA, Metra, Amtrak) to establish time lines for service

Implementation Considerations:

- Implementation may need to occur in numerous phases, as individual services are added
- Project success will depend upon project progress from transit operators

Potential Funding Sources: FTA New Starts, State bonds, TIF

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $2,000,000,000

Image 2-16: The Clinton Subway will provide a third north-south subway corridor serving the West Loop.

Clinton Subway

Project Description: New north-south subway through the West Loop connecting from Chinatown Station (Red) to North/Clybourn Station (Red).

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2020

Next Steps:

- Conduct feasibility study for subway to estimate alignment and cost
- Identify funding opportunities

Implementation Considerations:

- Project would connect into the West Loop Transportation Center
- Line would significantly improve transit access in River North and SW Loop
- Project may need to be built in numerous phases
- Would connect to McCormick Place, Motor Row and Chinatown directly to West Loop rail terminals

Potential Funding Sources: FTA New Starts, State/local bonds, Public/Private partnership

City Role: Partner with CTA

Cost Estimate: $3,000,000,000

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Regional Transit Capacity

CTA Signal & Capacity Upgrades

Project Description: Upgraded signals and removal of slow zones on high-capacity CTA rail lines serving the Central Area.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2012

Next Steps:

- Support CTA and RTA in identifying funding source(s)
- Project design & construction

Implementation Considerations:

- Helps solve reliability and capacity problems noted by Task Force
- Recent project along Dan Ryan Branch (Red) has eliminated slow zones
- North-side Red and Blue Line branches are two of the three busiest lines in the CTA system

Potential Funding Sources: Federal Capital Transit Funds, Local/State Bonds

City Role: Support CTA

Cost Estimate: $1,500,000,000

Image 2-17: Improving the performance and capacity of the existing rail service into the Central Area is a top priority.

Metra Capacity Upgrades

Project Description: Capacity and express-service upgrades on two highly utilized lines: UP-NW and UP-W.

Implementation Goal: Complete both by 2012

Next Steps:

- Complete Alternatives Analysis
- Engineering, design and construction

Implementation Considerations:

- Potential to increase from 63 to 74 trains per weekday on UP-NW
- Potential to increase from 59 to 80 trains per weekday on UP-W
- Both lines currently at or near capacity limits during weekday peak periods

Potential Funding Sources: FTA New Starts (up to 80% match), Local/State Bonds

City Role: Support (Metra)

Cost Estimate:

- $536,000,000 (UP-W)
- $419,000,000 (UP-NW)

Image 2-18: Busy and overcrowded Metra lines will be upgraded to provide more and faster trips into the Central Area.

CREATE Program

Project Description: Removal of key rail-to-rail and rail-to-road crossings to improve reliability of freight and passenger rail operations.

Implementation Goal: Three-phase program to be complete by 2020

Next Step: Identify funding for second phase of program

Implementation Considerations:

- Allows more reliable or expanded service to the south suburbs, including relocation of Metra service to LaSalle Station
- Project also allows for reduction of freight service in Central Area

Potential Funding Sources: Federal Funds, State Funds, Railroad Funds

City Role: Partner with IDOT, Railroads

Cost Estimate: $2,700,000,000

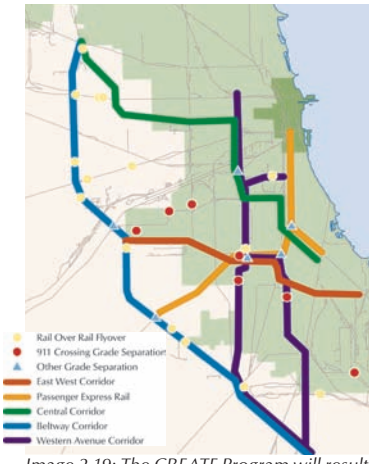


Image 2-19: The CREATE Program will result in reliability improvements for both freight and passenger rail in the region.

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Pedestrian Environment *(also see Urban Design and Streetscape improvements in Chapter 3)*

Image 2-20: The surface parking lot south of the station along Jackson is a prime site for an intermodal transfer facility.

Union Station Access/Intermodal Upgrades

Project Description: Significant upgrades to the transportation features at and around Union Station, including direct access points, improved pedestrian environment and an intermodal transfer center.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2012

Next Steps: Feasibility and coordination studies with Amtrak, Metra and RTA to create program of improvements/funding

Implementation Considerations:

- Existing surface lot south of Union Station has been identified for bus loading facility, and is connected to Union Station via underground walkway
- Potential redevelopment atop Union Station offers opportunity for improvements.

Potential Funding Sources: CMAQ; Amtrak; TIFs and other taxing districts.

City Role: Partner with Amtrak and Metra

Cost Estimate: $30,000,000

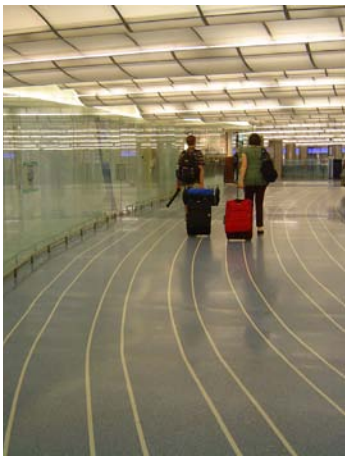


Image 2-21: An improved pedway section connects to Millennium Station.

Pedway System Improvements

Project Description: Build upon existing network of internal passageways through the Central Loop.

Implementation Goal: Explore potential to connect to commuter stations in West and South Loop.

Next Steps:

- Conduct assessment of pedway system
- Work with private building owners to identify potential routes, infrastructure upgrades, and costs

Implementation Considerations:

- Finding pedestrian passage below River between Madison and Adams
- Monroe Transitway project may include east-west pedestrian level

Potential Funding Sources: ITEP; TIFs and other taxing districts; CMAQ; Local Bonds

City Role: Partner with Building Owners

Cost Estimate: Undetermined

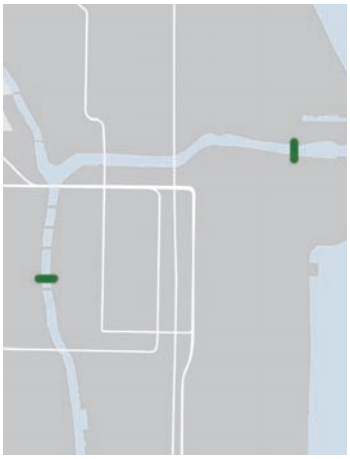


Image 2-22: Chicago River pedestrian bridges at two locations.

Chicago River Pedestrian Bridges

Project Description: New pedestrian connections over the River at two locations: West Loop and Streeterville.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2020

Next Step: Explore feasibility of bridge locations in these two locations.

Implementation Considerations:

- West Loop bridge would optimally connect to redeveloped Union Station and serve commuter traffic
- Streeterville bridge would serve tourist and residential pedestrians

Potential Funding Sources: ITEP; TIFs and other taxing districts; CMAQ; Local Bonds

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $60,000,000 (2 bridges)

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Traffic Circulation

Wacker Drive Reconstruction - Phase II

Project Description: Completion of north-south portion of Wacker Drive Reconstruction Project (east-west portion to Lake Street completed).

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2012

Next Steps:

- Identify State funding match for federally committed dollars
- Complete project design and construction

Implementation Considerations:

- Wacker Drive noted as the most active office corridor in Central Area
- Improves auto and pedestrian environment along high traffic area of the Loop
- Design to incorporate streetscape elements and green infrastructure

Potential Funding Sources: State/Local Bonds, TIF

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $350,000,000

Image 2-23: The Wacker Drive reconstruction project will be continued south of Lake Street to Congress Parkway.

North Lake Shore Drive Improvements

Project Description: Multifaceted project to improve traffic operations along North Lake Shore Drive and expand/improve open space along the Lakefront.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2020

Next Step: Create feasibility study for project

Implementation Considerations:

- Improved intersection at Chicago Ave would expand left turn lane
- Reducing angle of curve(s) at Oak Street Beach would improve hazardous turning movement
- Provides more space for bicycle & pedestrian paths along Lakefront

Potential Funding Sources: Local/State Bonds, CMAQ, Federal earmark

City Role: Partner Role with IDOT

Cost Estimate: $200,000,000 (additional park improvements along this portion of the Lakefront are included under Waterfront projects in Chapter 3)

Image 2-24: Expansion of the open space along the Lakefront provides an opportunity to improve numerous existing transportation issues.

Traffic Management Center

Project Description: A dedicated location for traffic management to utilize the upgraded signals, cameras and monitoring systems in place in the Central Area.

Implementation Goal: Ongoing Program

Next Steps:

- Identify staffing needs for establishing Traffic Management Center
- Identify funding source for operations

Implementation Considerations:

- Enhances safety and security of Central Area's assets by allowing for more efficient response to events/incidents
- Completion of signal interconnection projects in West Loop and Streeterville add to ability to control traffic flow

Potential Funding Sources: CMAQ, parking/transportation district fees, general operating funds

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: No major capital investment anticipated (requires staffing)

Image 2-25: A dedicated traffic management center will allow the City to better utilize the signal and monitoring upgrades that have been made over the last decade.

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Traffic Circulation *(continued)*

Image 2-26: A new north-south arterial will provide access to the last major development zone in the Central Area.

Wells-Wentworth Connector

Project Description: New north-south arterial through the River South district, connection from Harrison south to Cermak.

Implementation Goal: Phase I (Harrison to 18th) by 2012; Phase II by 2016.

Next Steps:

- Design and construct first phase
- Identify funding source for second phase from 18th to Cermak

Implementation Considerations:

- Location at Cermak would provide connection to Dan Ryan feeder ramps
- Construction needs to be coordinated with development proposals along South Branch of River

Potential Funding Sources: Local/State Bonds, TIF

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $45,000,000

Image 2-27: Additional bridges will improve connections from the South Loop and Near South westward.

Street Bridges over South Branch

Project Description: Connect grid system over South Branch of the River at Taylor and Polk or 16th.

Implementation Goal: Complete Taylor bridge by 2016, additional bridge by 2020.

Next Steps:

- Design and construct Taylor Street bridge
- Identify location for second bridge at Polk or 16th

Implementation Considerations:

- Approach for Taylor Street bridge has been created by retail development
- Coordinate with Wells-Wentworth Connector

Potential Funding Sources: Local/State Bonds, TIF

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $50,000,000 per bridge (2 bridges)

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Alternative Modes

West Loop Bicycle Station

Project Description: Build upon success of Millennium Park Station (at left), adding an additional station for bicycle parking and rental in the West Loop.

Implementation Goal: Complete West Loop station by 2012

Next Steps:

- Create West Loop bicycle station targeting commuters
- Identify additional locations/markets

Implementation Considerations:

- Work with RTA and Metra to research customer base for West Loop station
- Lanes and access need to be combined with new stations

Potential Funding Sources: ITEP; TIFs and other taxing districts; CMAQ; Local Bonds

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: $1,000,000

Image 2-28: The bicycle station and rental facility at Millennium Park is highly utilized.

Expand Bicycle Lanes

Project Description: Comprehensive program to install lanes and signage through the Central Area.

Implementation Goal: Ongoing program

Next Steps:

- Identify major routes for each Central Area subdistrict
- Combine with effort to increase indoor bicycle parking in Central Area offices
- Address safety perceptions through driver education program

Implementation Considerations:

- City's Bike 2015 Plan establishes goals for the number of east-west and north-south routes
- Combine with Streetscape program in identified corridors

Potential Funding Sources: ITEP; TIFs and other taxing districts; CMAQ; Local Bonds, SSAs

City Role: Project Lead

Cost Estimate: Undetermined (coordinate with scheduled roadway and streetscape improvements)

Image 2-29: The network of bicycle lanes will be completed to add key north-south and east-west routes through the Central Area.

Expand Water Taxi Service

Project Description: Continued expansion of Water Taxi service along north and south branches to serve new development.

Project Implementation Goal: Ongoing

Next Steps:

- Work with private developers to create docks along Riverwalk
- Study market for water taxi services

Implementation Considerations:

- Improved access to Navy Pier could be achieved by creating water connection from south edge to the Canal Basin
- Combine with strategy to create high intensity development and recreation along waterway

Potential Funding Sources: Public-private partnership with developers, water taxi operators

City Role: Partner with Taxi Companies and Developers

Cost Estimate: Undetermined

Image 2-30: The City will capitalize on opportunities to increase the water taxi service area.

CENTRAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

National & International Connections

Image 2-31: Express service to the Central Area from the airports is a major goal for the local business community.

Airport Express Rail Service

Project Description: Express transit service from new downtown terminal station to O'Hare and Midway along existing CTA rail lines.

Implementation Goal: Provide upgraded service by 2012

Next Step: Identification of private operating entity by CTA

Implementation Considerations:

- Creative mechanisms are being discussed, including involving the private sector in financing and operating the proposed express service to Midway and O'Hare
- Potential financing mechanisms would leverage public investment dollars, and could include asset sale, public-private partnerships, operating agreements, or other options

Potential Funding Sources: State/Federal Funds (construction), Private (operation)

City Role: Partner with CTA

Cost Estimate: $1,500,000,000

Image 2-32: Reinvestment in the passenger facilities at Union Station will bolster its role as a major gateway to the Central Area.

Union Station Capacity/Facility Upgrades

Project Description: Improved passenger facilities and platforms for intercity rail passengers to enhance Union Station as a gateway into the City and Central Area.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2012

Next Step: Project design and construction

Implementation Considerations:

- Combines with additional upgrades around Union Station
- Improved capacity would benefit Amtrak and Metra service
- Metra plans to move SouthWest Service to LaSalle Street Station, which will help add capacity

Potential Funding Sources: Amtrak, TIF, SSA

City Role: Support Amtrak and Metra

Cost Estimate: $60,000,000

Image 2-33: The expansion and improvement of the Midwest rail network would strengthen Chicago's role as the main hub.

Expand/Upgrade Midwest Rail

Project Description: Continued expansion of the Midwest rail system (with Chicago as the central hub) to create additional travel options to Central Area for business and tourism.

Implementation Goal: Ongoing Program

Next Steps:

- Support efforts of Amtrak to increase State and Federal funding for service
- Invest in Union Station facilities for tourists and business commuters

Implementation Considerations:

- Recent increases in service levels have lead to major ridership increases to Milwaukee and St. Louis corridors
- Project includes continued investment in high-speed rail corridors to Detroit and St. Louis

Potential Funding Sources: State agreements to fund new service & upgraded infrastructure

City Role: Support Amtrak

Cost Estimate: Undetermined

REGIONAL SUPPORTING PROJECTS

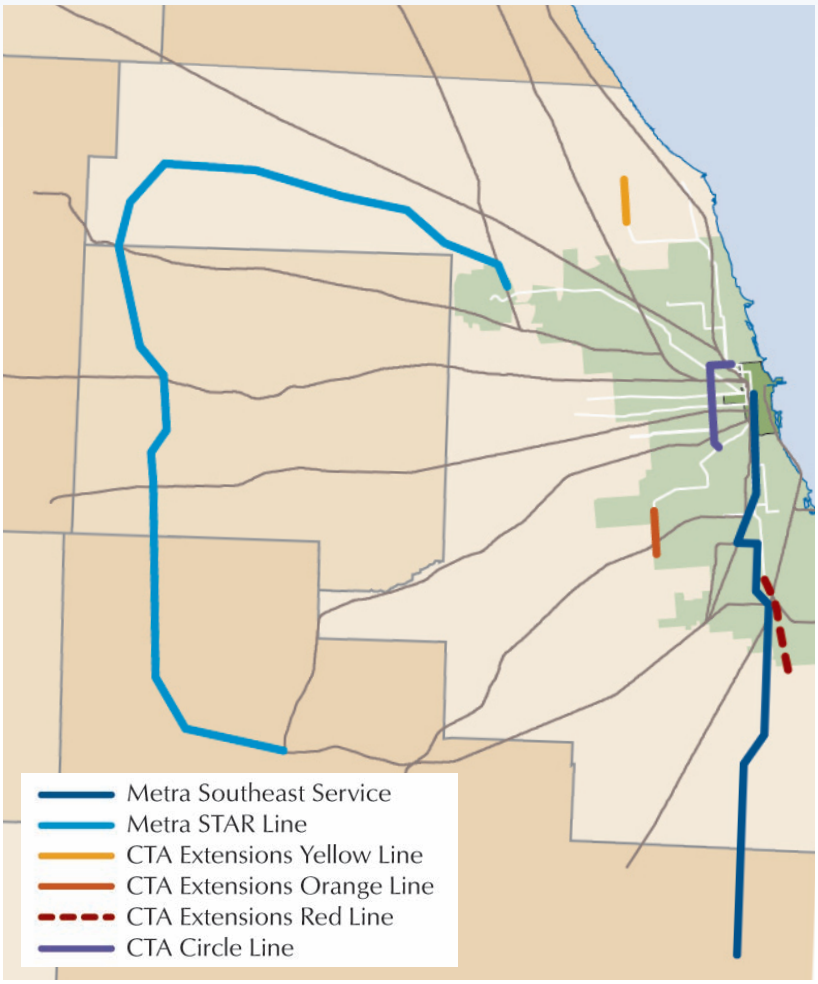
In addition to the regional transit capacity enhancements for existing lines serving the Central Area, there are a host of new transit lines under planning throughout the region. Each of these expands the reach of the regional transportation network, creating more options for people to use transit to access downtown Chicago.

Each of these projects are expected to apply for transit funding through the federal government, which requires extensive feasibility studies, alternatives analyses, and environmental evaluations.

While continued implementation of transit expansion project such as these will ensure that more people in the region maintain access to the Central Area, these projects are not included in the bottom line budget for the CAAP, and the City of Chicago will play a supporting role in the development of these projects.

A set of six projects are in planning by the CTA and Metra, with a total estimated investment of more than $6 billion dollars. Listed below is a brief description of each project, the estimated timeline for completion and a current cost estimate.

Figure 2-5: Regional Supporting Transit Projects



CTA Red Line Extension

Project Description: Extension of the South (Dan Ryan) Branch of the Red Line from 95th Street as far as 130th Street.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2016

Cost Estimate: $1,000,000,000

CTA Yellow Line Extension

Project Description: Extension of the Yellow Line service from its existing terminus in Skokie to the Old Orchard Mall in northern Cook County.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2016

Cost Estimate: $300,000,000

CTA Orange Line Extension

Project Description: Extension of the Orange Line south from Midway Airport to Ford City Mall.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2016

Cost Estimate: $300,000,000

CTA Circle Line

Project Description: A new transit "Loop" outside of the Central Area would provide new connections at the edges of the Central Area and reduce congestion in the Loop.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2020

Cost Estimate: $3,000,000,000

Metra SouthEast Service

Project Description: New commuter rail line travelling from LaSalle Station to the southeast suburbs along an existing rail line.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2016

Cost Estimate: $550,000,000

Metra STAR Line

Project Description: New commuter rail line would use existing rail right of way between Joliet and Rolling Meadows, then access O'Hare along I-90/NW Tollway.

Implementation Goal: Complete by 2020

Cost Estimate: $1,100,000,000

PHASING PLAN

This Phasing Plan is based upon the current status of each project, the rating of the Transportation Task Force and the input of the Steering Committee. The projects are divided into three phases, and the City's role in project implementation is noted.

Figure 2-6: 2008-2012 Transportation Projects

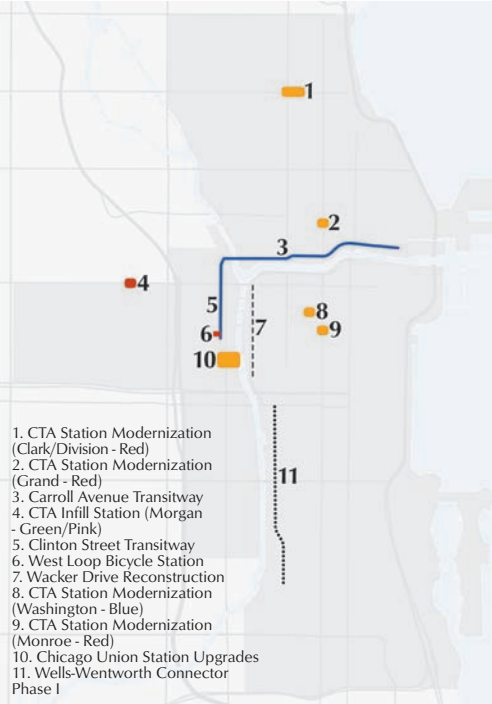


Table 2-1: 2008-2012 Transportation Projects

City Lead	Cost
CTA Station Modernization (4 Stations)	$360,000,000
Wacker Drive Reconstruction (Phase II)	$350,000,000
Carroll Avenue Transitway	$260,000,000
Clinton Street Transitway	$60,000,000
CTA Infill Station (Morgan - Green/Pink)	$60,000,000
Union Station Access/Intermodal Upgrades	$30,000,000
Wells-Wentworth Connector (Phase I)	$30,000,000
West Loop Bicycle Station	$1,000,000
Total	**$1,151,000,000**

City Partner/Support	Cost
Airport Express Rail Service	$1,500,000,000
CTA Signal & Capacity Upgrades	$1,500,000,000
CREATE Program (Phase I)	$750,000,000
Metra UP-W Upgrades	$536,000,000
Metra UP-NW Extension & Upgrades	$419,000,000
Union Station Capacity/Facility Upgrades	$60,000,000
Transit/Passenger Information Systems	$10,000,000
Total	**$4,775,000,000**

Subtotal (2008-2012)	**$5,926,000,000**

Figure 2-7: 2012-2016 Transportation Projects

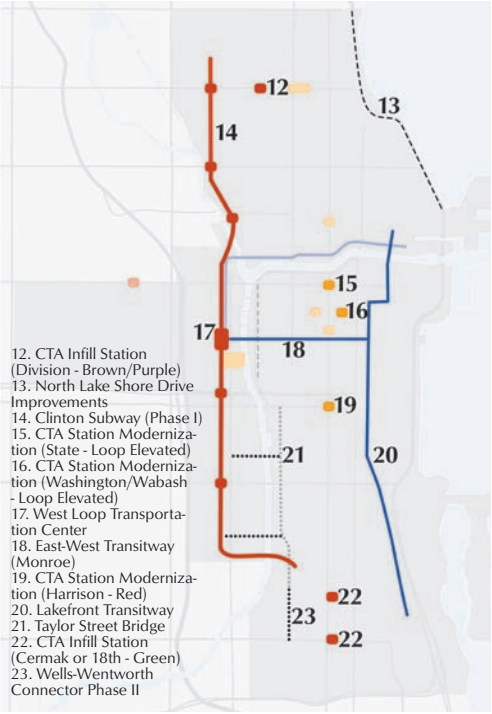


Table 2-2: 2012-2016 Transportation Projects

City Lead	Cost
West Loop Transportation Center	$2,000,000,000
CTA Station Modernization (3 Stations)	$270,000,000
East-West Transitway (Monroe)	$200,000,000
Lakefront Transitway	$150,000,000
CTA Infill Station (Cermak or 18th - Green)	$60,000,000
CTA Infill Station (Division - Brown/Purple)	$60,000,000
South Branch Bridge at Taylor Street	$50,000,000
Wells-Wentworth Connector (Phase II)	$15,000,000
Total	**$2,805,000,000**

City Partner/Support	Cost
Clinton Subway (Phase I)	$1,000,000,000
CREATE Program (Phase II)	$750,000,000
North Lake Shore Drive Improvements	$200,000,000
Transit/Passenger Information Systems	$10,000,000
Total	**$1,960,000,000**

Subtotal (2012-2016)	**$4,765,000,000**

All figures based on 2007 $ amounts.

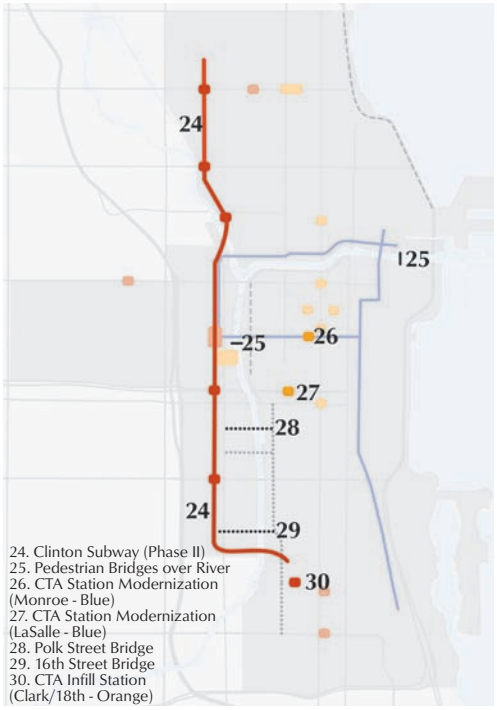
PHASING PLAN

Table 2-3: 2016-2020 Transportation Projects

City Lead		Cost
CREATE Program (Phase III)		$1,200,000,000
CTA Station Modernization (2 Stations)		$180,000,000
CTA Infill Station (Clark/18th - Orange)		$60,000,000
Pedestrian Bridges over River		$60,000,000
South Branch Bridge (16th or Polk)		$50,000,000
	Total	**$1,550,000,000**
City Partner/Support		**Cost**
Clinton Subway (Phase II)		$2,000,000,000
	Total	**$2,000,000,000**
	Subtotal (2016-2020)	**$3,550,000,000**
	TOTAL COST	**$14,241,000,000**

All figures based on 2007 $ amounts.

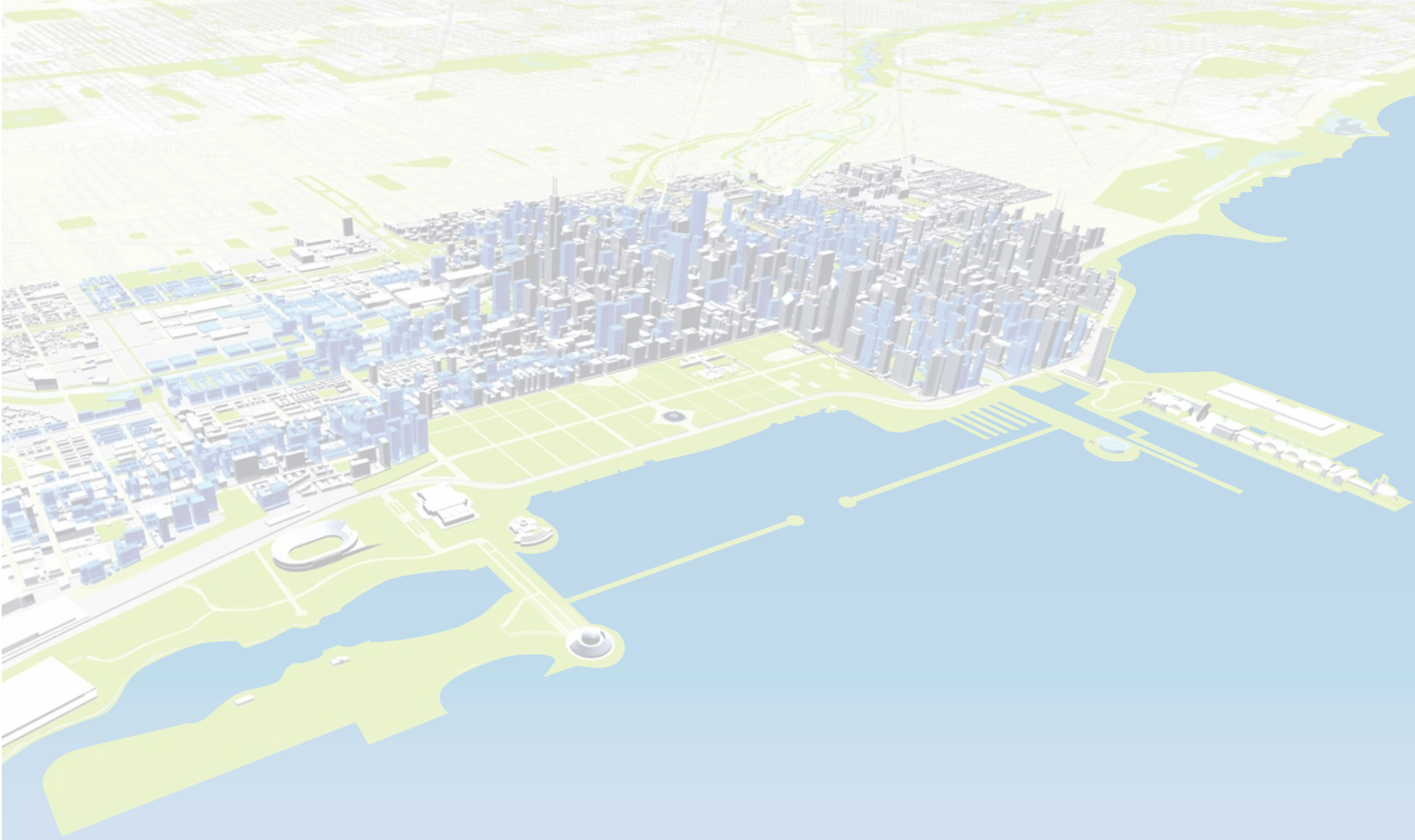
Figure 2-8: 2016-2020 Transportation Projects



Regional Supporting Projects

These transit projects expand the regional system centered on the Central Area, but are located entirely outside the study area and thus are not included in the Action Plan budget. The City should continue to coordinate with the Chicago Transit Authority and Metra as they study and plan these major proposed capital investments, which would total an additional $6.25 billion.

Phase	Project	Cost
2012-2016	CTA Red Line Extension	$1,000,000,000
	Metra SouthEast Service	$550,000,000
	CTA Orange Line Extension	$300,000,000
	CTA Yellow Line Extension	$300,000,000
2016-2020	CTA Circle Line	$3,000,000,000
	Metra STAR Line	$1,100,000,000
	TOTAL	**$6,250,000,000**



Chapter 3

Urban Design, Waterfront & Open Space

PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Image 3-1: New park space has been added in the center of the Lake Shore East development.

Image 3-2: The completion of Millennium Park and its open space and recreational amenities creates a signature attraction.

Image 3-3: The first phase of Ping Tom Park has been completed along the South Branch.

Investments in parks, waterfront amenities and streetscape and corridor enhancements are essential if a high quality-of-life is to be maintained in Chicago's Central Area. The Central Area contains the most densely developed and expensive land in Chicago, presenting a challenge to the provision of open space and recreational amenities for its growing numbers of residents, workers, students and visitors.

Completed projects (2001-2006)

Millennium Park: Millennium Park is complete and serves as Chicago's signature downtown park around which high levels of private sector investment are occurring.

Grant Park Framework Plan: This plan defines a series of enhancements to improve the function and appearance of Grant Park over a multi-year timeline.

Wacker Pier/Renovated Coast Guard Station: Following a complete renovation, the Chicago Marine Safety Station now houses the Coast Guard, the Illinois Conservation Police and the Chicago Police Marine Unit.

River Access through Montgomery Ward Site: The residential and commercial redevelopment of the former Montgomery Ward headquarters campus now includes a public walkway along the riverfront.

Veteran's Memorial: The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial located along the Chicago River at Wacker and State is complete, providing a high-quality, open space anchor for the Riverwalk system.

Chicago River Museum: The McCormick Tribune Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum is open in the southwest bridge tower of the Michigan Avenue Bridge.

Ping Tom Park Phase 1: The first phase of Ping Tom Park along the Chicago River in Chinatown is complete.

Walter Payton Campus Park: A campus park at Walter Payton College Preparatory School at Oak and Wells is complete.

Neighborhood Parks: A number of community parks to serve adjacent residential and mixed-use neighborhoods are complete:

- Park #546 at Lakeshore East
- Park #513 at 15th & Indiana
- Heritage Green Park (At Adams & DesPlaines across from Old St. Patrick's Church)

Work Process

At four meetings and several small group work sessions over six months, the Urban Design, Waterfront & Open Space Task Force followed a three-step process to review and refine strategies and projects.

1. Confirmed status of 2003 Central Area Plan projects and identified additional projects
2. Conducted a goals and needs analysis
3. Identified costs, implementation factors, and project recommendations

The Task Force also assessed the design issues related to five district focus areas and five signature streets through charrettes and mobile workshops.

PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

- Park #547 at 18th & Calumet
- Franklin School Campus Park at 225 W. Evergreen
- Park #511 at 630 North Kingsbury (Erie Park)

South Loop Annex School/Teachers Academy: The campus park at the South Loop Annex School/Teachers Academy, located at 55 W. Cermak Road, is complete.

Soccer Fields at Moody Bible Institute: New play fields are in place between LaSalle and Wells at Moody Bible Institute.

Plaza at Chicago and State: A new public plaza at Chicago and State, adjacent to McDonalds, is complete.

Chicago Lakefront Harbor Framework Plan: Completed plans to expand the Chicago harbor system include a new transient boat facility adjacent to Navy Pier and new harbors at 31st and 87th Streets.

Couch Place: A "Green Alley" demonstration project.

Projects Underway or Nearing Completion (2007-2008)

East Wacker Drive Riverwalk: Riverwalk features and vendor space along the southern edge of the Chicago River are in place between Michigan and Franklin.

Northerly Island: The Northerly Island Framework Plan is underway to develop improvements that will make this a key waterfront park amenity area.

Streetscape Projects: A series of streetscape improvements are in the design stage, scheduled for implementation, or under construction:

- Congress Streetscape – Michigan Avenue to Wells Street
- Michigan Avenue Streetscape – Roosevelt to 24th Street
- Wabash Phase 1 – Wacker to Harrison
- Wabash Phase 2 – Harrison to Roosevelt

Park Projects: Six public parks are in the design phase:

- Library Tower Park – Harrison & State
- 24th & Federal
- Pritzker Park Reconfiguration – State & Van Buren
- Park at Roosevelt Collection
- Kinzie Park – Kinzie & Des-Plaines
- Printers Row Park
- Park at Adams & Sangamon
- Park behind 16th & Wabash

Image 3-4: The campus park at the Teacher's Academy has added functional open space in the Near South.

Image 3-5: Improvements continue along the existing Lakefront Trail.

Image 3-6: New harbor space will be added along the Lakefront, including Gateway Harbor at Navy Pier

GOALS AND NEEDS

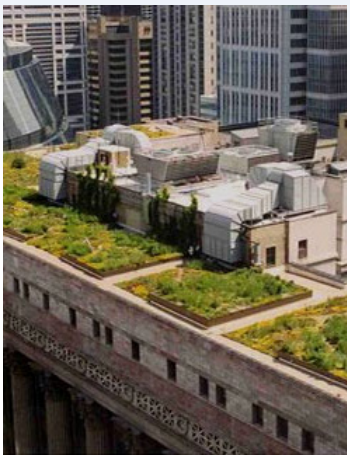


Image 3-7: The green roof atop City Hall serves as an example for other buildings in the Central Area.

Image 3-8: Erie Park along the North Branch has become a focal point for residential development.

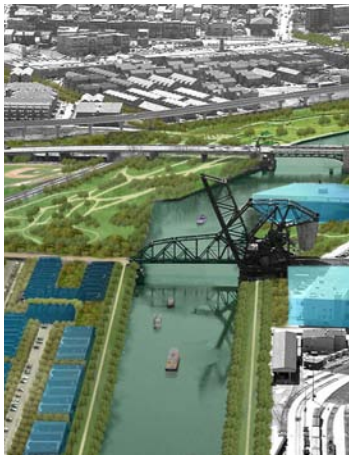


Image 3-9: The second Phase of Ping Tom Park will continue this award-winning public space north of 18th Street.

The 2003 Central Area Plan established a major theme of expanded and connected waterfronts and open spaces to create great public places. It also set goals for urban design within the Central Area. The Urban Design Task Force took these goals as a starting point for the action planning process, establishing key needs for each goal and using them to help prioritize the proposed urban design projects.

Strengthen Chicago as an Environmentally Sustainable City

- *High performance green buildings:* The design and construction of new buildings will continue to be improved by meeting existing and new sustainable building standards. The renovation of existing buildings and a commitment to historic preservation will save resources and reduce waste while preserving the character of the Central Area. Increasing the energy efficiency of buildings by upgrading energy and building codes and using density bonuses and expedited approval processes as incentives will help Chicago reduce its contribution to global climate change.
- *Environmental regulations, policies and incentives promoting green building:* Building Green/ Green Roof Policy; 2001 Energy Plan; Energy Code; Stormwater Ordinance; Landscape Ordinance; Green Permitting Program; Green Roof Improvement Fund; Green Roof Density Bonus; Green Roof Website (www.chicagogreenroofs.org); Green Roof Grant Program; and the Chicago Green Homes Program.
- *Clean air, land and water:* Clean air and water, resource conservation and biodiversity are key elements of a healthy urban environment. Maintaining and improving upon Chicago's urban design to optimize its environmental benefits by preserving, expanding and improving the quality and function of vegetated areas; capturing, cleaning and using precipitation; encouraging water conservation; and contributing towards improved air quality will ensure a cleaner environment for current and future generations.
- *Sustainable open spaces:* Sustainably designed and maintained, publicly-accessible parks, waterfronts and open spaces will improve the quality of life in Chicago and engage people in the outdoors environment.
- *Green streets and public right-of-ways:* Discouraging the use of personal vehicles by encouraging alternative modes of transportation such as walking, biking and public transit will help lower our City's carbon emissions and help mitigate global climate change.

These objectives can be reached through the implementation of the City's Green Streets/Alleys program, the Green Urban Design (GUD) and Chicago Climate Change recommendations, and revisions to the Open Space Impact Fee.

Strengthen the Lakefront as Chicago's Great Public Space

- *Improved connections to the Lakefront:* Identify strategies to better connect the Lakefront to all neighborhoods and business districts within the Central Area.
- *Improved Lakefront Trail system:* Define projects that will improve problematic conditions along the Lakefront Trail in the Central Area. A high priority is the configuration

GOALS AND NEEDS

of the Lakefront Trail between Navy Pier and North Avenue, including a dedicated pedestrian access over the Chicago River.

- *Improved Lakefront connections to Central Area attractions:* Identify projects or initiatives to link the Lakefront to the river, coordinating access between Central Area destinations.

Develop the Riverfront as a Premier Public Space and Continuous System

- *Formation of a riverfront management entity:* Support formation of an entity to oversee operations of a riverwalk system.
- *Improved access to and circulation along the riverfront:* Invest in public infrastructure to improve vertical access from street level to the riverwalk as well as underbridge connections for pedestrian access.
- *Established mix of uses along the riverfront:* Encourage the inclusion of commercial space in new construction or renovation projects to accommodate active uses oriented to and accessible from the riverwalk.

Create the Next Generation of Parks

- *Integrated parks and open space with new development:* Plan and develop public parks alongside new development of scale.
- *Integrated parks and open space in underserved areas:* Integrate parks into densely developed areas of the Central Area with the greatest imbalances of open space to resident/workforce populations.
- *Improved park amenities:* Integrate a wide range of recreational amenities into existing and planned major public parks, including Grant Park, Northerly Island and Ping Tom Park.
- *Partnerships with developers and other private donors:* Capitalize on opportunities to add new public open space integrated with or alongside new development projects in the Central Area, and identify other private partners willing to fund major new public investments, as in Millennium Park.

Complete the Central Area's Framework of Richly Landscaped Streets and Boulevards

- *Enhanced east/west streets and corridors:* Balance Chicago's rich heritage of signature north/south streets and corridors by improving a series of east/west streets and corridors.
- *Innovative green streets and alleys:* Utilize state-of-the-art techniques such as permeable pavement, rain gardens, and light-emitting diode (LED) lighting standards for green street and alley improvements.
- *Beautifully illuminated buildings and civic features:* Partner with the private sector to incorporate architectural lighting into streetscape enhancement projects, unifying character districts within the Central Area and reducing light pollution.

Image 3-10: Riverwalk Plaza will provide access to the riverfront and become part of a continuous pedestrian connection.

Image 3-11: Major street corridors, such as Michigan Avenue, will be maintained as richly landscaped street environments.

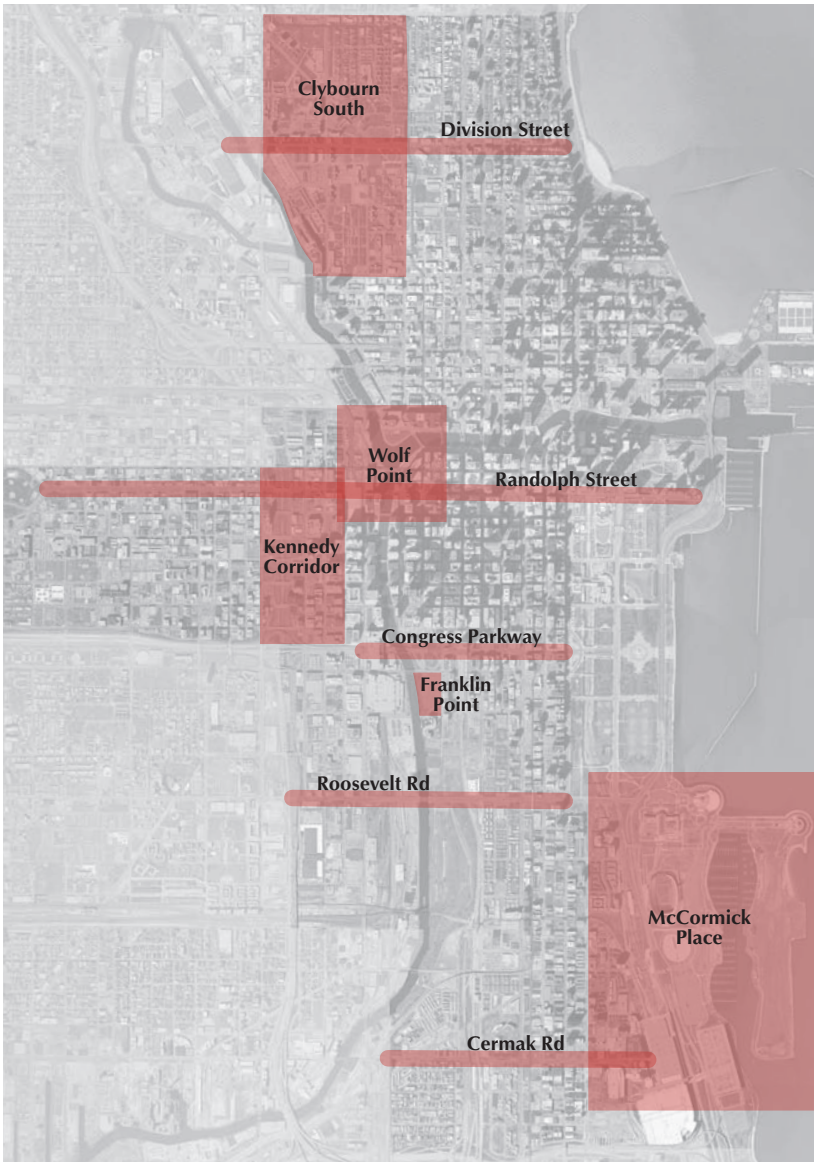
Image 3-12: The City will capitalize on opportunities to improve existing parks, such as the railscape improvements through Grant Park.

URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Chicago's Central Area is one of the most dynamic urban areas in the world. As the result of consistent growth over the past decade and at present, the urban form of the Central Area is evolving to meet demand. It is important to guide the physical characteristics of this growth in order to assure that each subdistrict within the Central Area functions well and reinforces the character of Chicago's great public spaces, corridors and neighborhoods.

The Urban Design Task Force provided urban design guidance for five district focus areas and five signature streets within the Central Area. As the Central Area has grown and development has expanded out of the Loop, adjacent communities, such as the Near West and Near South, have realized significant changes. The amount of residential and commercial growth has greatly changed the built environment in those communities. These areas of growth and expansion are considered **"Focus Areas"** in which particular attention is needed to continue to ensure a high quality of life and livability of these areas.

Figure 3-1: Urban Design Focus Areas and Signature Streets



"Signature Streets" are defined as streets with distinguishable character that anchor neighborhood, shopping and/or employment districts. Chicago has a well defined series of north-south signature streets that have seen public and private investment over the past decade. Near future investments should enhance the function and character of key east-west streets around which high levels of private investment are occurring.

As the Central Area continues to evolve into a world-class area to live, work, and play, it is critical to balance development and redevelopment with public open spaces and waterfront amenities. Investments in urban design projects are needed not only to support new private sector investments, but also to balance the provision of open space and public amenities to elevate the quality of life.

The Central Area is renowned for its world-famous collection of signature buildings. As opportunities arise for a new generation of signature buildings to be built in the Central Area, it is important to encourage and accommodate these developments. In conjunction, opportunities to incorporate open space, plazas, pedestrian amenities, and access to waterfront and transit should be considered.

Detailed findings, illustrations, and recommendations for the Signature Streets and Focus Areas are provided in Chapter 4, which addresses the 12 planning subdistricts in detail.

Details of the Urban Design, Waterfront and Open Space projects are provided on the following pages.

URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

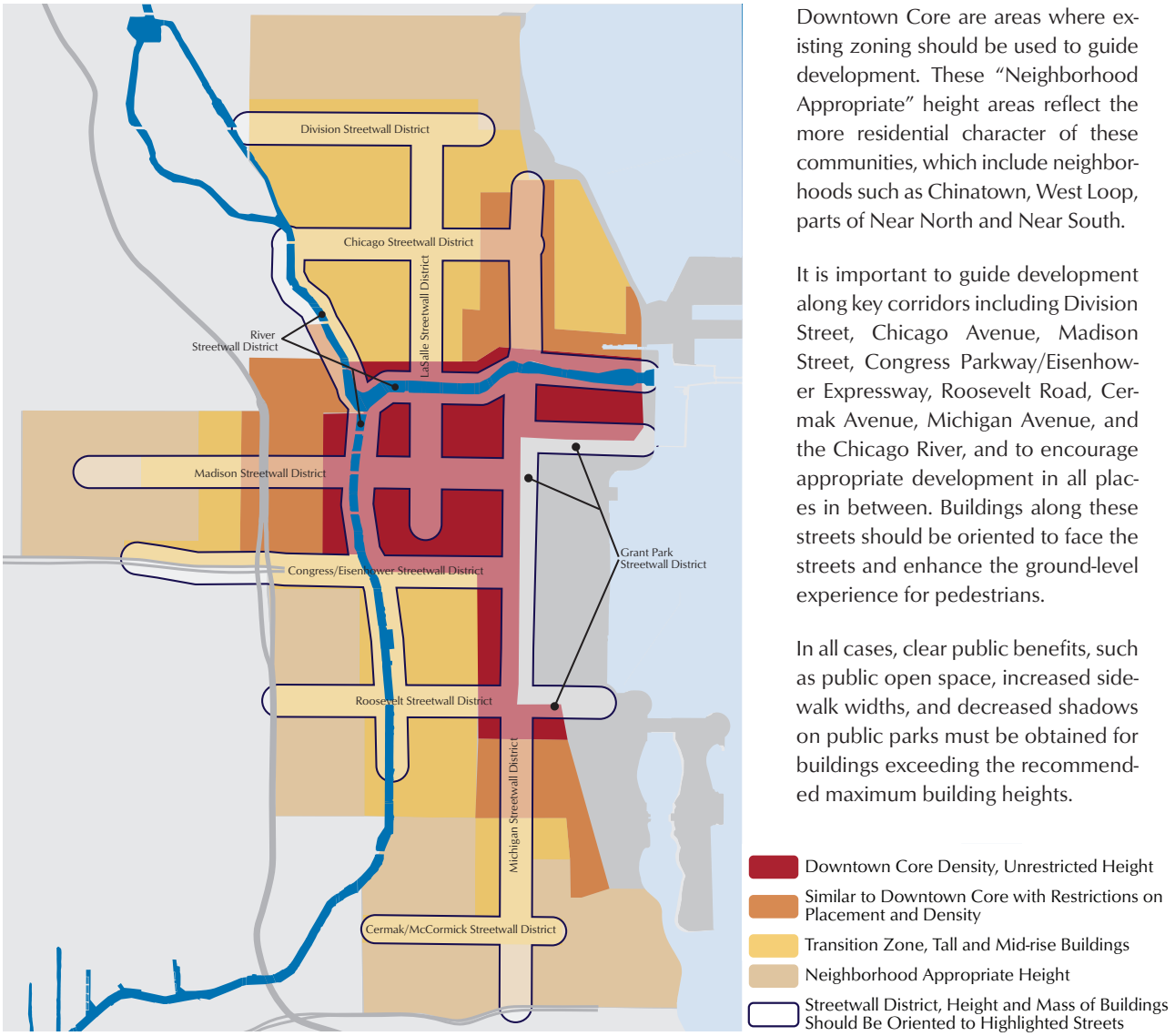
Conceptual Principles for Building Heights

As the Central Area continues to grow and redevelop, allowable building heights and appropriate densities are changing, and new opportunities for signature buildings should be encouraged. In general, the existing zoning classifications are appropriate and should be used to guide placement, density, mass, bulk, and height in the Central Area.

The Downtown Core (zoned DC) functions as the region's economic core. Very tall buildings are appropriate in the Downtown Core, along the Chicago River, and surrounding Grant Park to take advantage of existing infrastructure, create a dense, dynamic, urban area and enhance the beautiful Chicago skyline.

The areas around the "Downtown Core" are mixed-use areas that are becoming highly residential in use. These "Transition Zones" (zoned DX) are areas in which tall and mid-rise buildings are appropriate. The Near South and Near West communities in particular have benefitted from high levels of new development in recent years, and, as a result, present new opportunities to create dynamic, pedestrian-oriented communities focused around high-quality streets and public amenities. The Near North Side is an established mixed-use/residential area and new developments should be of appropriate height to reinforce existing development.

Figure 3-2: Conceptual Principles for Building Heights


Division Streetwall District
Chicago Streetwall District
LaSalle Streetwall District
River
Streetwall District
Madison Streetwall District
Grant Park
Streetwall District
Congress/Eisenhower Streetwall District
Roosevelt Streetwall District
Michigan Streetwall District
Cermak/McCormick Streetwall District
Downtown Core Density, Unrestricted Height
Similar to Downtown Core with Restrictions on Placement and Density
Transition Zone, Tall and Mid-rise Buildings
Neighborhood Appropriate Height
Streetwall District, Height and Mass of Buildings Should Be Oriented to Highlighted Streets

Beyond the Transition Zones and Downtown Core are areas where existing zoning should be used to guide development. These "Neighborhood Appropriate" height areas reflect the more residential character of these communities, which include neighborhoods such as Chinatown, West Loop, parts of Near North and Near South.

It is important to guide development along key corridors including Division Street, Chicago Avenue, Madison Street, Congress Parkway/Eisenhower Expressway, Roosevelt Road, Cermak Avenue, Michigan Avenue, and the Chicago River, and to encourage appropriate development in all places in between. Buildings along these streets should be oriented to face the streets and enhance the ground-level experience for pedestrians.

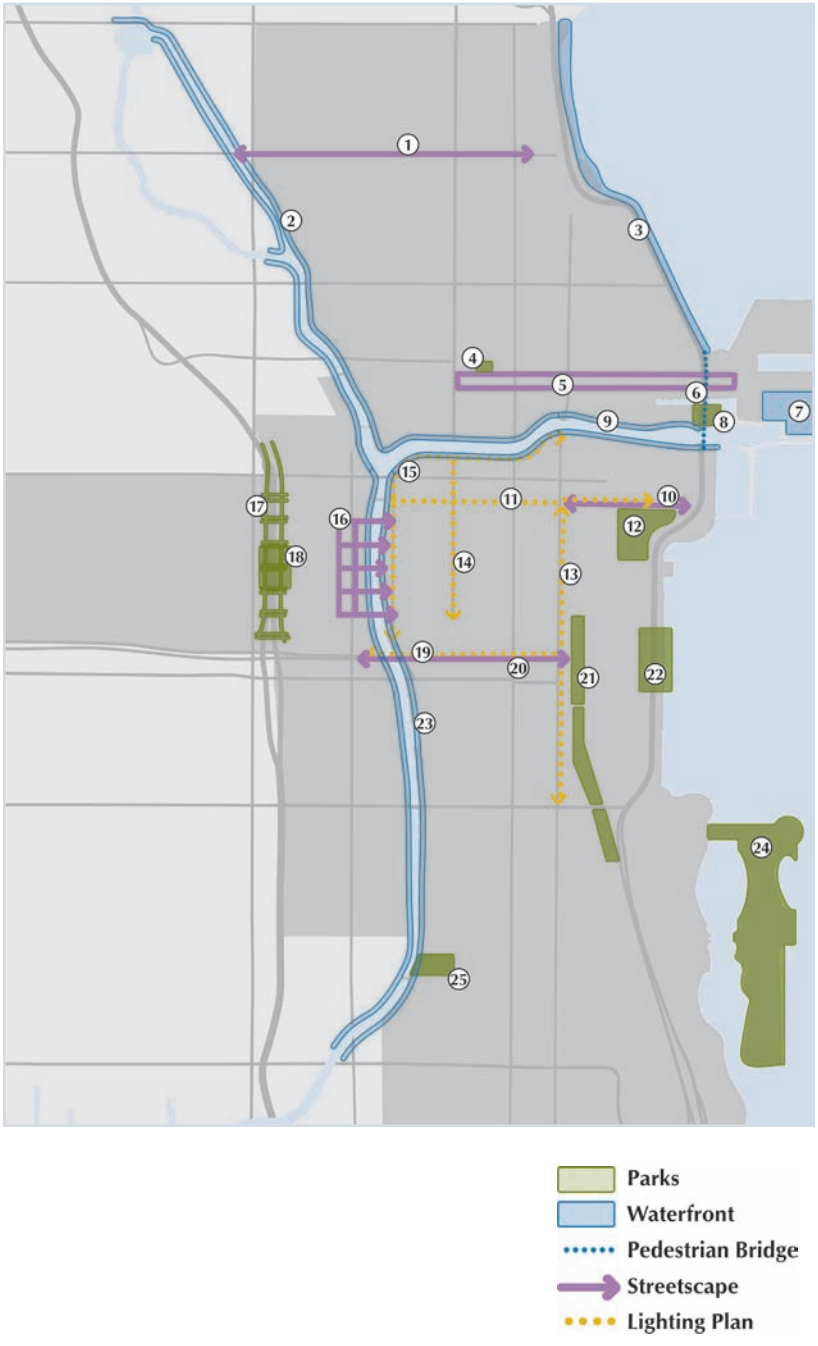
In all cases, clear public benefits, such as public open space, increased sidewalk widths, and decreased shadows on public parks must be obtained for buildings exceeding the recommended maximum building heights.

URBAN DESIGN, WATERFRONT AND OPEN SPACE PROJECTS

Central Area Project Key

1. Division Streetscape
2. North Branch Riverfront Improvements
3. Lakefront Trail Expansion
4. Fort Dearborn Park
5. Illinois and Grand Streetscape
6. Lakefront Trail Bridge
7. Gateway Harbor
8. DuSable Park
9. Main Branch Riverfront Improvements
10. East Randolph Streetscape
11. Randolph Lighting Enhancements
12. Grant Park Improvements North
13. Michigan Lighting Enhancements
14. LaSalle Lighting Enhancements
15. Wacker Lighting Enhancements
16. West Loop/Union Station Area Streetscape
17. Kennedy Corridor Enhancements
18. Kennedy Cap
19. Congress Lighting Enhancements
20. Congress Streetscape
21. Grant Park Railscape
22. Pedestrian Connection at Queen's Landing
23. South Branch Riverfront Improvements
24. Northerly Island Park Improvements
25. Ping Tom Park Phase II

Figure 3-3: Urban Design, Waterfront, and Open Space



URBAN DESIGN, WATERFRONT AND OPEN SPACE PROJECTS

Urban Design

Streetscape Improvements

Project Description: Chicago has a series of prominent north/south streets within the Central Area that have recently benefited from streetscape upgrades. To complement these, improvements are proposed for east/west streets to enhance motorist and pedestrian mobility and to anchor investment in surrounding areas. Improvements should incorporate environmentally-friendly design elements and materials from the City's "Green Alleys and Streets" initiative and from the Green Urban Design Task Force.

- East Randolph: Michigan to Lake Shore Drive (2,500 lf) = $8,750,000
- Congress Pkwy: Michigan Ave. to Wells St. (2,545 lf) = $19,000,000
- Grand & Illinois: Michigan Ave. to Lake Shore Drive (5,500 lf) = $19,000,000
- Division: Lake Shore Drive to Goose Island (6,000 lf) = $21,000,000
- West Loop/Union Station Area: between Jackson and Washington (3,300lf) =$33,000,000

Implementation Goal: 2008-2016

Implementation Responsibility: CDOT

Cost Estimate: Varies, see above

Image 3-13: Central Area streetscape investments will focus on signature east-west corridors.

Lighting Enhancements

Project Description: A program of structural lighting improvements along Michigan Avenue has been developed by Schuler Shook.

Michigan should serve as the pilot location, followed by Congress, Wacker, LaSalle and Randolph. A grant or loan program should be established to facilitate private sector implementation. Lighting improvement guidelines should include recommendations from the "Lights Out Chicago" program, which saves migratory birds, saves energy, and decreases maintenance costs.

Implementation Goal: 2008-2016

Implementation Responsibility: CDOT, DZP, DOE

Cost Estimate: $ 1,000,000

Image 3-14: The lighting plan for Michigan Avenue should be emulated in other key corridors such as LaSalle and Randolph.

Kennedy Corridor Enhancements & Cap

Project Description: Two complementary improvements that will improve connections between the Central Loop and the West Loop.

The short-term improvements include traffic calming elements, landscaping, and screening of the embankments to enhance pedestrian mobility. This improvement should supplement IDOT's standard highway improvements.

The long-term option involves creating new parkland over the Kennedy Expressway between Monroe and Washington Streets. This improvement would provide a signature amenity around which new office and residential development may be focused. This urban greenway would improve air quality and reduce noise pollution.

Implementation Goal:

- Enhancements =2008-2012
- Kennedy Cap = 2016-2020

Implementation Responsibility: CDOT

Cost Estimates:

- Enhancements = $10,000,000
- Kennedy Cap = $500,000,000

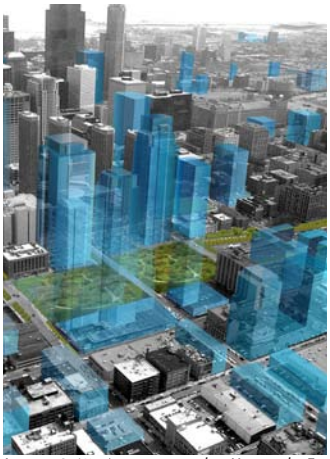


Image 3-15: A cap over the Kennedy Expressway is a long-term option for connecting the West Loop and the Near West.

URBAN DESIGN, WATERFRONT AND OPEN SPACE PROJECTS

Waterfront

Image 3-16: Additional open space will improve this currently uninviting segment of the Lakefront.

Lakefront Trail Expansion

Project Description: The Lakefront Trail between North Ave. and Navy Pier will be expanded by up to 200 ft. Introduce landscaping to create parkland and expanded pedestrian and bicycle paths between the city and the Lakefront.

A feasibility study should be conducted. This study would address a range of issues including environmental, regulatory processes, design and construction alternatives and public support of the project. This project should be undertaken in conjunction with the North Lake Shore Drive improvements planned by the Chicago Department of Transportation and the Illinois Department of Transportation at the Oak St. curve and Chicago Ave.

- Navy Pier to Oak St. Beach (3,300 lf) = $85,800,000
- Oak St. Beach to North Ave. Beach (3,500 lf) = $91,000,000

Implementation Goal: 2012-2016

Implementation Responsibility: CDOT, DZP, CPD

Cost Estimate: $177,000,000

Image 3-17: Gateway Harbor will expand opportunities for boating in the Central Area.

Gateway Harbor

Project Description: This signature boat dock facility will be created downtown along the southern edge of Navy Pier at the inlet of the Chicago River. Utilize the existing "Dime Pier" area for a new facility to accommodate boats of various sizes.

Implementation Goal: 2008-2012

Implementation Responsibility: CPD, City

Cost Estimate: $30,000,000

Image 3-18: A management entity will coordinate improvements and maintenance.

Chicago River Management Entity

Project Description: In order to implement the riverfront projects a management entity must be identified, funded and empowered to develop and manage the improvements. Such an entity should evolve from the private sector with public sector support. Key activities include:

- Raising funds for land and easement acquisitions in the river corridor
- Raising capital for public use and access improvements to the river
- Working with government agencies, land owners, non-profits and private corporations to promote and ensure the quality of the river corridor
- Monitoring public access to the river
- Promoting events and activities that celebrate use of the river

Implementation Goal: 2008-2012

Implementation Responsibility: Private & Non-Profit

Cost Estimate: $250,000

URBAN DESIGN, WATERFRONT AND OPEN SPACE PROJECTS

Main Branch Riverfront– Lake Shore Drive to Franklin

Project Description: A continuous multi-level, but mostly street level, riverwalk at the north side of the Chicago River with under-bridge connections at Michigan Avenue and Lake Shore Drive to DuSable Park. Establish clearly identified on-street connections west of Michigan Avenue and east of Wells Street ($12,000,000).

Develop a dock level riverwalk at the south side of the Chicago River with under bridge and vertical connections for continuous water access. Develop "market," "civic" and "arcade" zones per recent City plans to activate all levels of riverwalk ($80,000,000).

The City has identified $1million in its Capital Improvement Plan for design at the Wacker Drive Riverwalk, and $200,000 for gateway canopy and repairs (Lake Shore Drive and the river)

Implementation Goal: Phase 1 2008-2012; Phase 2 2012-2016

Implementation Responsibility: MWRD, CDOT, DZP

Cost Estimate: $92,000,000

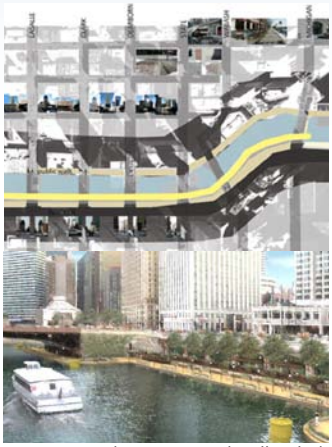


Image 3-19: The Main Branch will include underbridge connections for pedestrians.

North Branch Riverfront – Lake to Halsted

Project Description: This part of the Riverwalk has several components, which include:

- ADA Accessible Boatyard ($3,5000,000)
- Off-river connection from Kinzie Park to Fulton House riverwalk ($500,000)
- Under-bridge connection on east bank at Kinzie St. to connect to future Wolf Point development.($5,000,000)
- West bank, establish a riverwalk, Incorporate a park at street level with future development ($20,000,000)
- On-river path to connect lower level walks south of Grand Ave. to meet Erie Park ($15,000,000)
- East bank, establish a riverwalk from River Village to the North Ave. Turning Basin ($15,000,000)
- Improve access to east bank between North and Division ($12,000,000)
- Landscape/Screen the west side riverbank from Grand Ave. to North Ave. Turning Basin ($10,000,000)

Implementation Goal: 2012-2016

Implementation Responsibility: CDWM, CDOT, DZP

Cost Estimate: $75,000,000

Image 3-20: The North Branch will become accessible for River North residents.

South Branch Riverfront– Lake to Harrison

Project Description: This part of the Riverwalk has several components, which include:

- Create a contiguous street level riverwalk with improved connections and access to larger plazas ($5,000,000)
- Create a dock level riverwalk on the east side of the River at Van Buren Street south to Harrison Street. Improve adjacent green space and introduce a vertical connection near Van Buren Street ($10,000,000)

Implementation Goal: 2012-2016

Implementation Responsibility: CDWM, CDOT, DZP

Cost Estimate: $15,000,000

Image 3-21: The South Branch Downtown will primarily maintain street-level plazas and pedestrian paths.

URBAN DESIGN, WATERFRONT AND OPEN SPACE PROJECTS

Waterfront (continued)

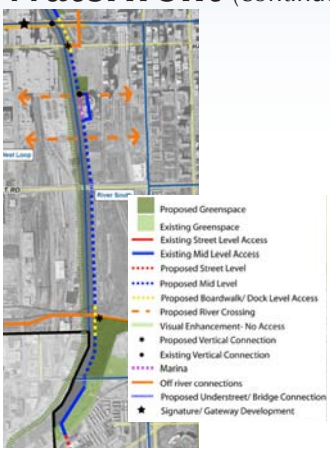


Image 3-22: Investments along this section of the Riverfront will connect numerous open space improvements.

South Branch Riverfront – Harrison to Stewart

Components in this section include:

- Mid-level riverwalk at Harrison St. south ($15,000,000)
- Vertical connection at Harrison St. ($2,000,000)
- Pedestrian and vehicular crossing at Taylor St. ($25,000,000)
- Polk St. Pedestrian crossing ($12,000,000)
- Underbridge connections Roosevelt and 18th St. ($500,000)
- Public park as part of Franklin Point development ($10,000,000)
- At south end of Ping Tom Park, designate/identify on-street connections via Princeton and Archer Avenues to Stearns Quarry and to future riverwalk development at East Canal Origins Park ($500,000)
- Enhance west side of riverbank, Harrison St. to Cullerton St., with landscape buffer ($10,000,000)

Implementation Goal: 2016-2020

Implementation Responsibility: CDWM, CDOT, DZP

Cost Estimate: $75,000,000

Open Space

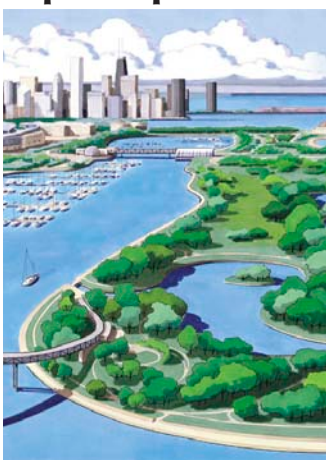


Image 3-23: Northerly Island will be transformed into a park built around conservation and sustainability principles.

Northerly Island Park Improvements

Project Description: Create a state-of-the-art park designed around environmental conservation/sustainable design principles to serve as an outdoor museum for conservation. Northerly Island is partially complete, but there are several aspects of this project that are unfinished. The following principles/projects should be incorporated as the island is developed:

- Reuse of existing structures
- Integration of sustainable design principles
- Creation of a wildlife/nature preserve

Promotion of environmental technologies to create a self-sufficient site to be used as an educational tool

Implementation Goal: 2008-2012

Implementation Responsibility: CPD

Cost Estimate: $75,000,000

Image 3-24: Existing Gardens in North Grant Park.

Grant Park Improvements North

Project Description: While the exact scope of this project has not yet been determined, the project will generally include reconstruction of the obsolete Monroe Street Garage and other public amenities associated with the garage structure. Open spaces and park facilities potentially affected by this project include Daley Bicentennial Plaza/Fieldhouse, Cancer Survivors Garden and "Peanut Park."

Implementation Goal: 2008-2012

Implementation Responsibility: CPD

Cost Estimate: $35,000,000

URBAN DESIGN, WATERFRONT AND OPEN SPACE PROJECTS

Ping Tom Phase II

Project Description: Develop Phase 2 of Ping Tom Park. Expand the existing 12-acre public urban park located at 19th Street and the South Branch of the Chicago River. In 2002, the Chicago Park District acquired 5 additional acres on the northeast side of the park. A former industrial site, or brownfield, the land will be cleaned up and redeveloped into a spacious community park with ball and soccer fields, a field house, and a swimming pool.

When completed, Ping Tom Memorial Park will be one of the largest neighborhood parks in Chicago. Phase 2 focuses on development of active recreational uses. Improvements include:

- A: Site development - $15,000,000
- B: Railway underpass - $5,000,000
- C: Multi-purpose center - $15,000,000
- D: Boathouse - $3,000,000

Implementation Goal: A-B 2008-2012, C-D 2012-2016

Implementation Responsibility: CPD, DZP, CDOT, Canadian National RR

Cost Estimate: $38,000,000

Image 3-25: The project will expand upon the latest addition to the Central Area's great public spaces.

DuSable Park

Project Description: A park at the inlet of the Chicago River at Lake Michigan to commemorate Chicago's founding pioneer. The public-private agreement with the developer of The Spire will assist with the development of this park and can serve as a model for new park developments adjacent to major new residential projects. A pedestrian/bicycle flyover bridge is planned to improve pedestrian access to this park but has not been included in this cost estimate.

The preliminary park design is partially the result of a robust community planning process. DuSable Park is named for Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable, the first non-native settler and founding father of Chicago. The site currently contains 3.5 acres of undeveloped land. The Park was originally announced in 1987 by then Mayor Harold Washington. The City of Chicago has pledged $3 million and the Park District has also budgeted $3 million for park development.

Implementation Goal: 2008-2012

Implementation Responsibility: CPD, CDOT, DZP

Cost Estimate: $17,000,000

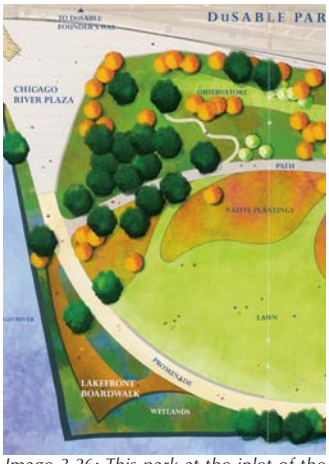


Image 3-26: This park at the inlet of the Chicago River will be dedicated to the first non-native settler of Chicago.

Lakefront Trail Bridge

Project Description: Currently the Lakefront Trail uses the same bridge over the Chicago River as Lake Shore Drive. A new pedestrian/bicycle bridge is proposed to improve this part of the Trail. This is often referred to as a flyover.

The new bridge will reduce conflicts between autos, pedestrians and bicyclists. Potential exists for combining creation of this bridge with the Spire and DuSable Park.

Implementation Goal: 2012-2016

Implementation Responsibility: DZP

Cost Estimate: $25,000,000

Image 3-27: The new bridge will separate bicycle and pedestrian traffic from the existing street crossing.

URBAN DESIGN, WATERFRONT AND OPEN SPACE PROJECTS

Open Space (continued)

Image 3-28: A "pocket park" integrated into this redevelopment site will create public open space in River North, where park space is limited.

Fort Dearborn Park

Project Description: The City is will partner with a private developer to redevelop the square block site currently occupied by the Fort Dearborn Post Office. Part of the redevelopment will include the construction of a new public open space.

This open space will serve the growing residential population of River North.

Implementation Goal: 2016-2020

Implementation Responsibility: DZP

Cost Estimate: $10,000,000 (expected public contribution)

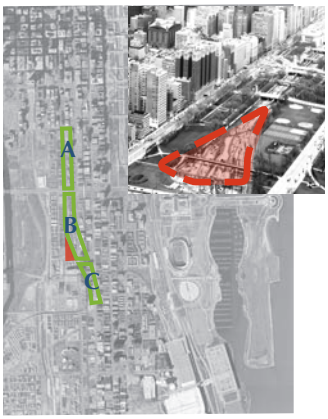


Image 3-29: The rail right-of-way that cuts through Grant Park will be improved with "green screening."

Railscape Improvements

Project Description: Screen the railroad throughout Grant Park and south to Museum Place. The open railroad trench could be improved by utilizing a "green screen" over the tracks. Explore potential to reduce the former rail service yard area (as depicted in red) generally known as the pennant lot.

There are three major sections to be improved:

- *Area A:* Grant Park Central (316,000 sf) = $7,900,000
- *Area B:* Grant Park South (688,000 sf) = $17,200,000
- *Area C:* Central Station Area (300,000 sf) = $7,500,000

Implementation Goal: 2012-2016

Implementation Responsibility: RTA, Metra, DZP, CPD

Cost Estimate: $32,6000,000

Image 3-30: The natural pedestrian connection from the Lakefront to Buckingham Fountain through Grant Park will be restored.

Pedestrian Connection at Queen's Landing

Project Description: The improvement of a pedestrian connection between Grant Park at Buckingham Fountain and the Lakefront across Lake Shore Drive is a key component of the Grant Park Framework Plan. Includes improvements to crosswalks and signage.

Queen's Landing was named after the 1959 visit by Queen Elizabeth II when she came ashore at that spot.

Implementation Goal: 2008-2012

Implementation Responsibility: CDOT

Cost Estimate: $500,000

PHASING PLAN

Based upon a combination of the Task Force ratings and the current status of projects, the draft implementation timeline that follows is provided for consideration:

Table 3-1: 2008-2012 Projects

Northerly Island Park Improvements	$75,000,000
Main Branch Riverfront (Phase I)	$46,000,000
Grant Park Improvements North	$35,000,000
Gateway Harbor	$30,000,000
Ping Tom Phase II (Site Dev./Railway Underpass)	$20,000,000
Congress Parkway Streetscape	$19,000,000
Grand & Illinois Streetscape	$19,000,000
DuSable Park	$17,000,000
Kennedy Corridor Enhancements	$10,000,000
East Randolph Streetscape	$8,750,000
Lighting Enhancements (Michigan, Congress & Wacker)	$600,000
Pedestrian Connection at Queen's Landing	$500,000
Chicago River Management Entity	$250,000
Subtotal (2008-2012)	**$281,100,000**

All figures based on 2007 $ amounts.

Figure 3-4: 2008-2012 Urban Design, Waterfront, and Open Space Projects

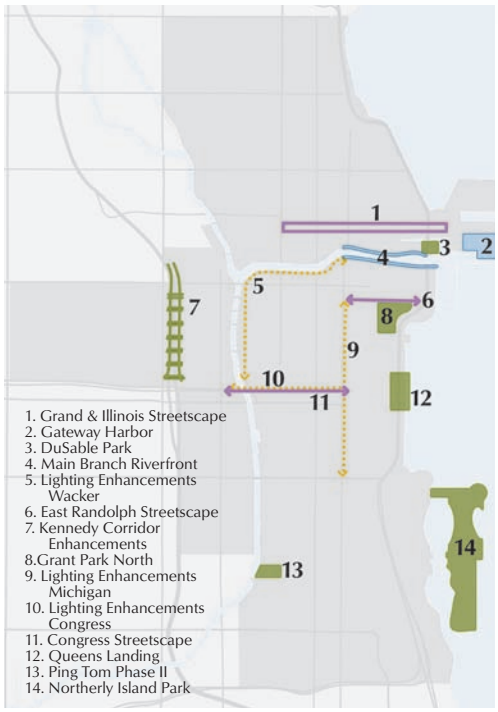
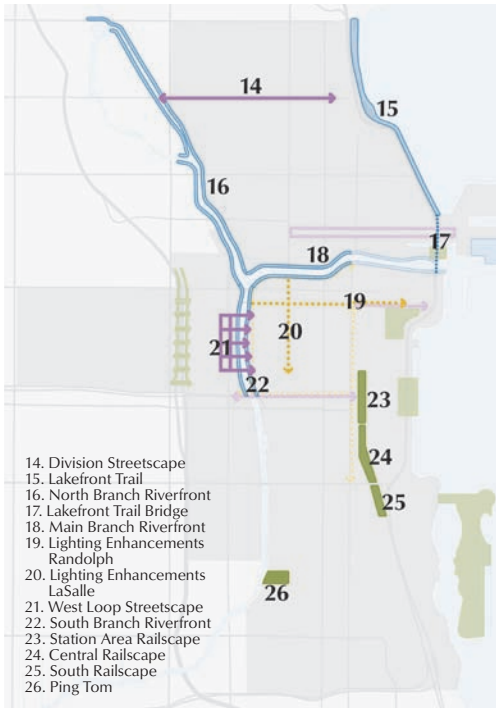


Table 3-2: 2012-2016 Projects

Lakefront Trail Expansion	$177,000,000
North Branch Riverfront (River North)	$75,000,000
Main Branch Riverfront (Phase II)	$46,000,000
West Loop/Union Station Area Streetscape	$33,000,000
Lakefront Trail Bridge	$25,000,000
Division Streetscape	$21,000,000
Ping Tom Phase II (Multi-Purpose Center/Boathouse)	$18,000,000
Grant Park South Railscape	$17,200,000
South Branch Riverfront (Downtown)	$15,000,000
Grant Park Central Railscape	$7,900,000
Central Station Area Railscape	$7,500,000
Lighting Enhancements (LaSalle & Randolph)	$400,000
Subtotal (2012-2016)	**$443,000,000**

All figures based on 2007 $ amounts.

Figure 3-5: 2012-2016 Urban Design, Waterfront, and Open Space Projects



PHASING PLAN

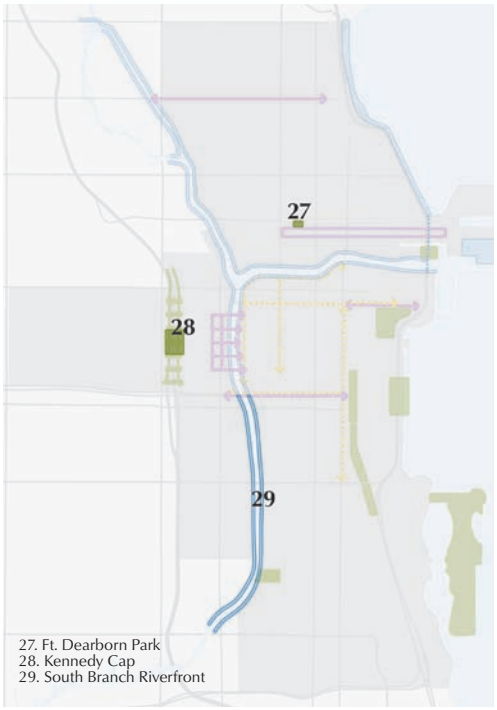
Table 3-3: 2016-2020 Projects

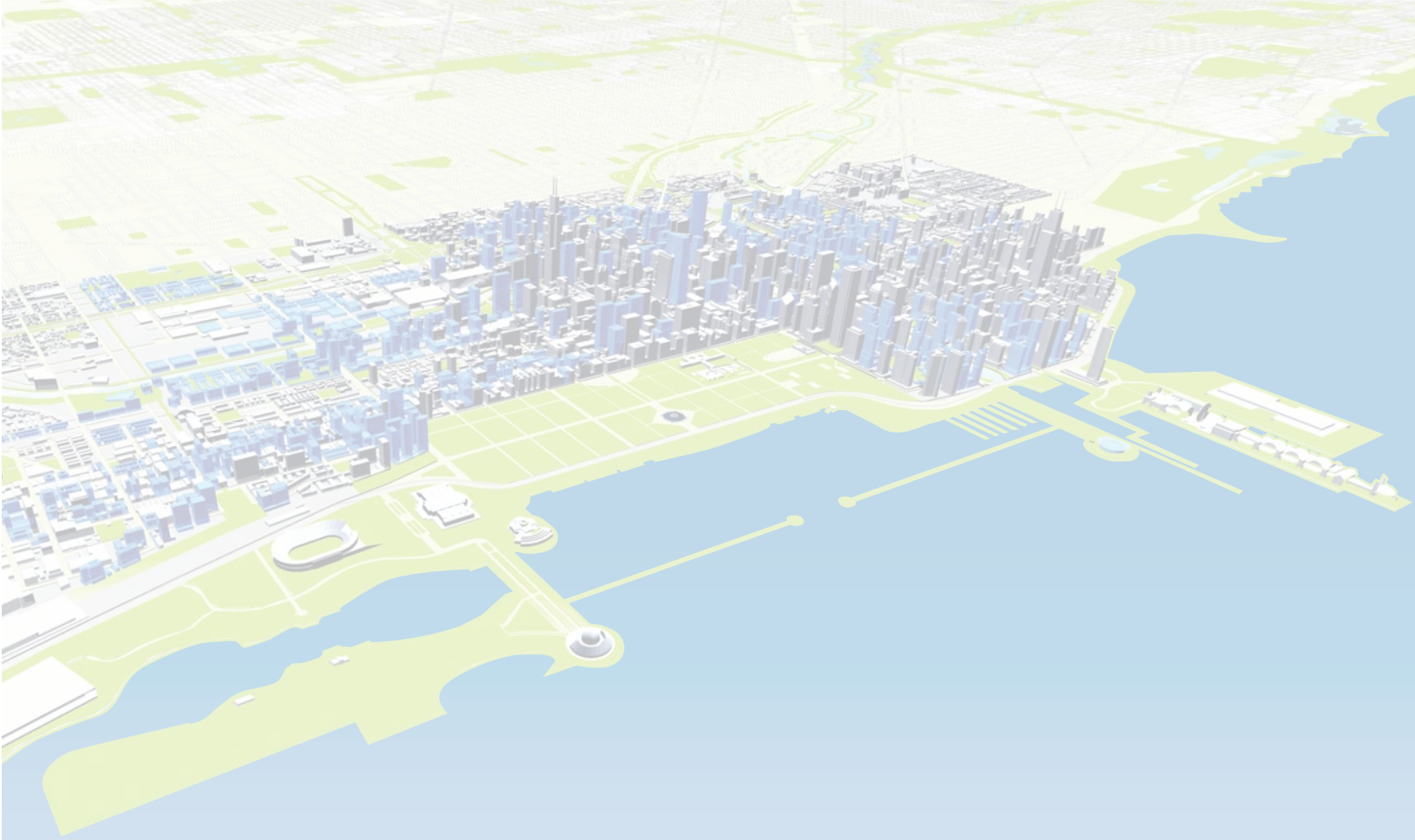
Kennedy Cap	$500,000,000
South Branch Riverfront (River South)	$75,000,000
Fort Dearborn Park	$10,000,000
Subtotal (–2020)	$585,000,000

All figures based on 2007 $ amounts.

TOTAL COST **$1,309,100,000**

Figure 3-6: 2016-2020 Urban Design, Waterfront, and Open Space Projects





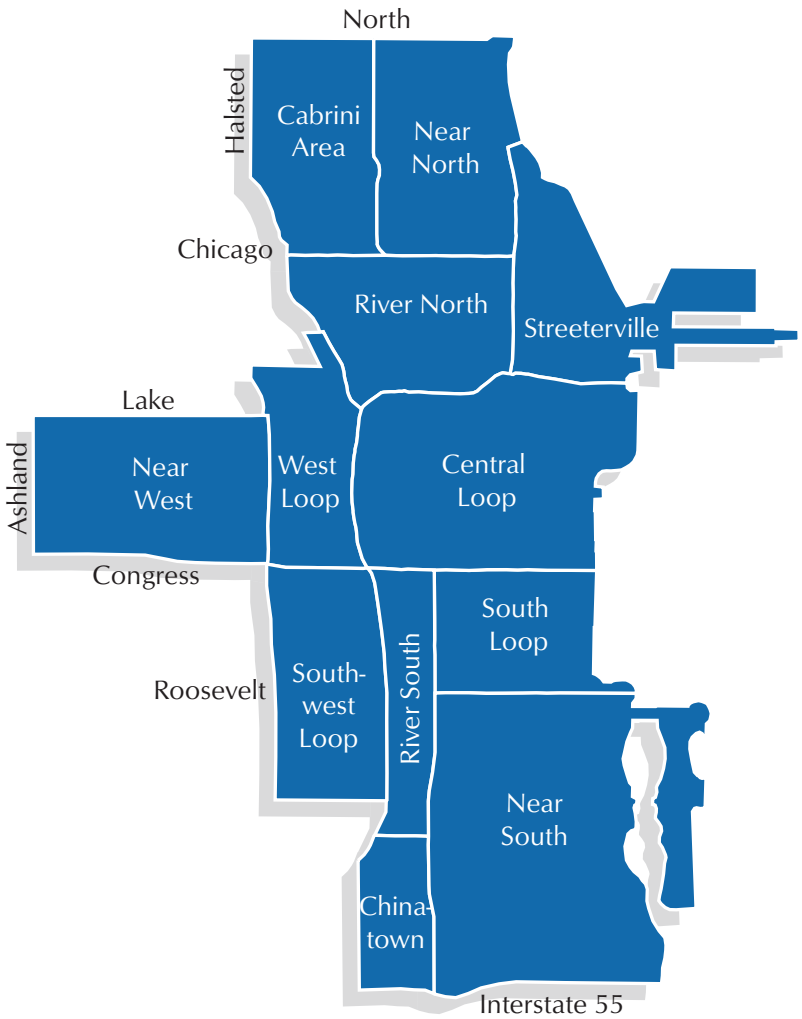
Chapter 4
Central Area Planning Subdistricts

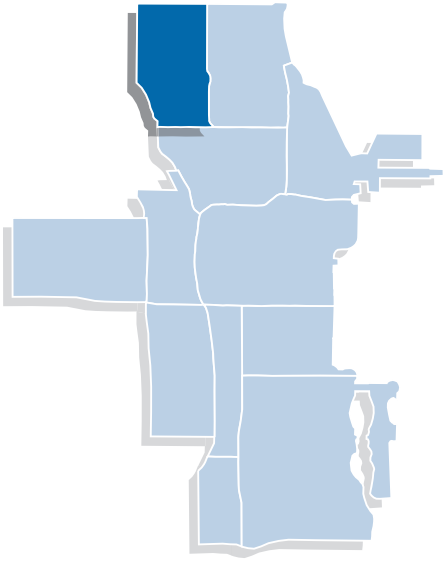
CENTRAL AREA SUBDISTRICTS

The City of Chicago's Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning divides the Central Area into twelve planning subdistricts. In some cases, the policies and projects contained within the Central Area Action Plan are located wholly within one subdistrict — in most cases, they span several subdistricts. For the purposes of presenting a succinct implementation plan, this section describes the key elements of the Plan for each subdistrict.

Each subdistrict report begins with a brief description of the character and ongoing development trends in that subdistrict; followed by a vision and set of goals; and lists of policies, actions and projects to be undertaken by the City between 2008 and 2020. Each section forms the basis for future planning and development in that particular portion of the Central Area.

Figure 4-1: Central Area Planning Subdistricts





Cabrini Area

Cabrini Area is located in the northwest corner of the Central Area and bounded on the north by North Avenue, on the south by Chicago Avenue, on the east by Orleans Street, and on the west by Halsted Street (north of Division) and the North Branch of the Chicago River (south of Division).

Cabrini-Green, one of the largest public housing developments in Chicago, has dominated the area for decades. Demolition of public housing high-rises began in 1995, followed by new developments including replacement housing for Cabrini-Green residents alongside market-rate and affordable housing. Commercial redevelopment includes Old Town Square, a grocery-anchored shopping center that demonstrates the viability of the Cabrini Area for retailers serving households with a broad range of incomes.

CABRINI AREA

Image CA-1: The Old Town Village townhomes along Clybourn provide affordable housing as part of CHA's Plan for Transformation.

Image CA-2: River Village is one of many new residential developments along the River.

Image CA-3: The new Schiff Residences (Mercy Housing) along Clybourn through the Cabrini Area.

Trends, 2000-2007

The Cabrini Area changed dramatically between 2000 and 2007, as the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) continued its "Plan for Transformation" for Cabrini-Green. North Town Village, Old Town Village and Near North Apartments are among the projects that have provided townhouses, mid-rise condominiums and apartments for households with a diverse set of incomes.

Another major redevelopment area is located in the southwest portion of the district along the Chicago River. The former Montgomery Ward campus has become a new neighborhood with both adaptive-reuse and new construction projects with residential and commercial space.

While the rest of the Central Area boomed in the 1990s, the Cabrini Area lost population. With the implementation of the Plan for Transformation, between 2000 and 2007 the area grew by an estimated 1,686 households and 2,712 residents to reach a population of 13,353.

New institutional facilities, including the Near North Branch of the Chicago Public Library, 18th Police District station, Jenner Academy of the Arts and Seward Park support residential redevelopment. A 58,000-SF retail center anchored by Borders Books was developed at North Avenue and Halsted Street, the highest capacity north-south roadway in the Cabrini Area and its western boundary.

Forecast, 2008-2020

In 2008, the Cabrini North Extension site is being redeveloped with a mix of 760 market-rate, public, and affordable housing units at the ParkSide of Old Town development. Redevelopment of the William Green Homes and Cabrini Extension South will complete the CHA's Plan for Transformation for Cabrini-Green.

The retail concentration around the North and Clybourn intersection continues its expansion into the Cabrini Area, with projects planned in the Halsted corridor south to Division Street. Plans have been unveiled for redevelopment of the 8.2-acre New City YMCA site at Clybourn and Halsted (1515 N Halsted). The developer, Structured Development, has plans for 550,000 SF of retail space and 280 residential units, with 10% of these units reserved as affordable housing and another 10% designated as low-income housing. Roundy's Supermarkets, a Milwaukee-based company, will anchor the retail portion of development with an 80,000-SF store on two levels.

2020 Vision/Goals

- The Cabrini Area will provide housing opportunities for households of a variety of types and with a range of incomes.
- Existing residents and newcomers will be well served with parks, schools and other community facilities.
- The Cabrini Area will strengthen its connection to the North Branch of the Chicago River, with infrastructure projects that enhance public access and use of the River corridor.
- As retail pushes south of North Avenue, the Halsted and Clybourn corridors will emerge as retail corridors with stores and services to meet the needs of local residents and complement the adjacent retail concentration at North and Clybourn.
- The Division and Chicago corridors will become important east-west connections with attractive streetscapes and high-density residential and retail uses.
- Public transportation options will be expanded by a re-opened Division Street Brown Line station and new stations on the proposed Clinton Street Subway that connects to the Red Line.

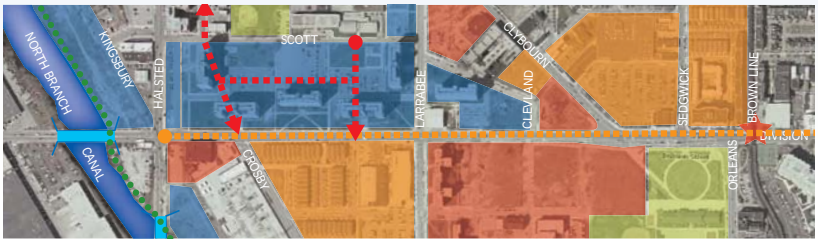
Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The Near North TIF and Chicago/Kingsbury TIF Districts cover much of the Cabrini Area and will provide infrastructure improvements, as well as support for affordable housing.

CABRINI AREA

Figure CA-1: Division Street Urban Design Recommendations



- While some private-sector development will proceed without incentives, others will require TIF support.

Development

- Redevelopment of CHA sites will create major opportunities for mixed-use (residential and commercial) development.
- Plans are unfolding for other sites, including the former White Way Sign site and the CMHDA site at Clybourn and Larrabee. Other opportunity sites remain.

Regulatory

- Existing zoning is generally appropriate and much of the area is already in Planned Developments (PDs). A few remaining industrial sites are likely to convert to residential and commercial development.

Urban Design

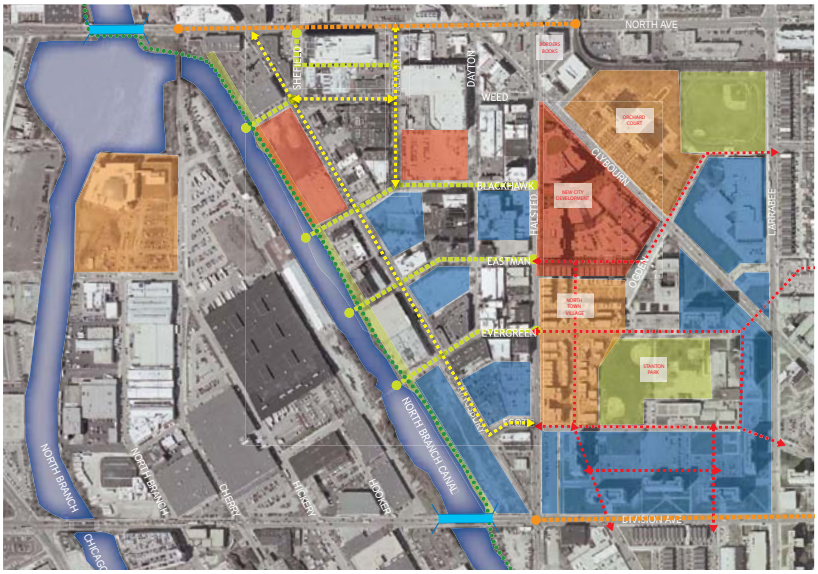
Clybourn South

The area around Clybourn Avenue between Division Street and North Avenue is undergoing major changes, and was identified as a district focus area during the planning process. This area includes a portion of the former Cabrini-Green public housing development, which is being redeveloped as part of the CHA Plan for Transformation. The urban design study area also included the area known as the Halsted Triangle. A number of large-scale developments are being planned or are underway, including Orchard Courts, New City Development and North Town Village.

Design recommendations for this area include the following (see Figure CA-2 below):

- The establishment of an inter-connected street network around which new development sites are oriented. These streets are identified for pedestrian, vehicular or service/loading orientations.
- Park and open space investments that improve access to the River.
- Large parcels in public control offer an opportunity for master planned communities that should include a mix of product types, distinctive project character, public amenities and supportive community retail.

Figure CA-2: Clybourn South Area Urban Design Recommendations



Signature Street – Division

Division is the key east-west street through the Near North and Cabrini Area. Unlike most other east-west streets, Division provides uninterrupted access from Inner Lake Shore Drive and the Lakefront to the Chicago River and Kennedy Expressway. This street is undergoing massive change as high levels of new residential and commercial projects are being developed. With the associated increase in residential density, and the proposal for a new CTA Brown Line Station at Division, pedestrian and vehicular use of this street will increase.

Design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure CA-1 above):

- Street and sidewalk upgrades are recommended to improve the function and appearance of this street (see discussion below of streetscape improvements under Cabrini Area Projects).
- Planted medians should be considered along with minimum sidewalk widths of 14 feet.

CABRINI AREA

Image CA-4: Suburban-style retail development, such as the Old Town Square shopping center, should be avoided in the future.

Image CA-5: The Riverwalk at 1000 N. Kingsbury will become part of a continuous pedestrian corridor that connects into the Central Loop and the Lakefront.

Image CA-6: The re-establishment of a CTA station at Division will improve access for Cabrini Area residents.

- New buildings should be oriented along street frontage or setback lines with their primary entrance oriented toward Division Street.
- Suburban development styles that feature parking lots between the street and building facades, such as Old Town Square, should be avoided in the future.
- Ground floor uses should include active uses such as retail in order to build and strengthen the pedestrian utilization of this corridor.

Cabrini Area Projects

(see project map below)

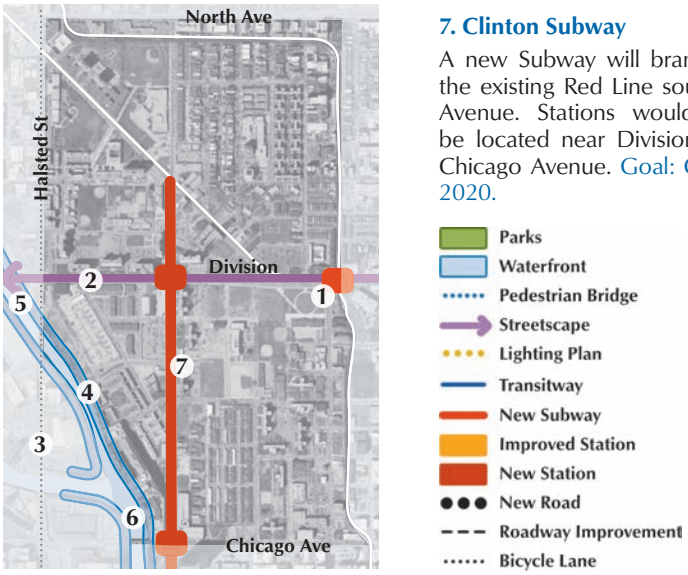
1. CTA Infill Station (Division - Brown/Purple)

A new station on the elevated Brown/Purple Line near Division and Orleans will serve the nearby residents and businesses. The Cabrini Area currently only has CTA rapid transit stations along its northern edge at North/Clybourn (Red Line) and Sedgwick (Brown/Purple Line). Goal: Complete by 2016.

2. Division Streetscape

Division anchors high levels of new private sector investment in housing and retail and should receive priority for streetscape enhancement funds. Streetscape elements should include wider sidewalks, street lighting, street trees, street furniture, improved crosswalks, bike lanes and planted medians. Goal: Complete by 2016.

Figure CA-3: Cabrini Area Projects



3. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

A bicycle lane along Division Street should be coordinated with the streetscaping improvements in this corridor and will build on existing bike routes along Halsted and Clybourn. Goal: Complete by 2020.

4. North Branch Riverfront

The North Branch section of the Riverwalk will be completed, creating a continuous pedestrian walkway and open space network. Improvements are proposed for both the east bank of the River and Goose Island. Goal: Complete by 2016.

5. River Bridges

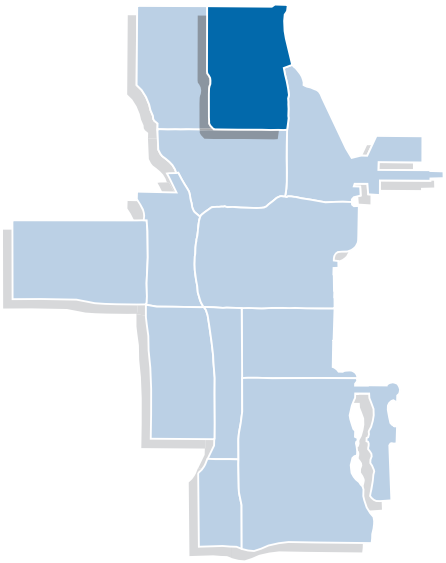
Though not in the Central Area, the Division and Halsted Street bridges (and railroad underpasses) will be upgraded to a minimum of four lanes to provide arterial quality access to the Kennedy Expressway and areas north and south. Goal: Complete by 2016.

6. Expanded Water Taxi Service

The water taxi service area will expand by developing new docks at Chicago Avenue and Goose Island. As riverfront development continues along the North Branch, the City will work with private developers to identify sites. Goal: Complete by 2016.

7. Clinton Subway

A new Subway will branch off from the existing Red Line south of North Avenue. Stations would potentially be located near Division Street and Chicago Avenue. Goal: Complete by 2020.



Near North

Near North is located in the northeast corner of the Central Area, bounded on the north by North Avenue, on the south by Chicago Avenue, on the west by Orleans Street, and on the east by Lake Michigan (between North Avenue and Division Street), and Inner Lake Shore Drive/Michigan Avenue (between Division Street and Chicago Avenue).

Near North is currently the most populated subdistrict in the Central Area, containing established neighborhoods such as Gold Coast, Old Town and Sandburg Village. Residential uses predominate in the northern half, while a mix of retail, institutional, entertainment, hotel and residential uses coexist in the southern half. Local and national retailers and restaurants are along major corridors, which include a portion of the North Michigan Avenue retail area. The Near North's institutional assets include the Newberry Library, the Chicago History Museum and the expanded Latin School.

NEAR NORTH

Image NN-1: High-density residential development continues, but is limited due to a relative lack of development sites.

Image NN-2: Loyola University has expanded its presence in the area with a new Student Center and 627-bed dormitory.

Image NN-3: Old Town is an established residential neighborhood in the Near North.

Trends, 2000-2007

The Near North contained over 35% of Central Area households, and a total of 35,298 residents as of the 2000 Census. In 2007, with the emergence of other residential subdistricts and with few development sites, its share of households fell to 25%, even as the estimated population rose slightly to 36,849.

New hotels in the Near North include the 415-room Hotel Sofitel. Loyola University expanded its Water Tower campus at Pearson and State, recently completing a student center and 627-bed dormitory. A continuing care retirement community, the first in the Central Area, is under construction, with classroom space for Loyola on the lower floors of the 53-story building. Walter Payton College Preparatory High School, Chicago's newest citywide selective enrollment high school, opened in 2000.

Forecast, 2008-2020

New residential development in the Near North will continue to be limited by the availability of development sites. Walton on the Park (450 units) is being built on the former Scottish Rite property, which had a rare large parking lot. Although North Avenue is largely built out, Chicago Avenue and Division Street corridors have significant redevelopment potential for higher density residential, retail and mixed-use projects.

Retail and entertainment corridors are located along North Michigan Avenue, Rush Street and Oak Street, where projects such as the new Barney's store will continue to strengthen the area retail draw for residents and visitors. The Elysian at State Street and Walton represents a new type of Central Area project, with both condominium hotel rooms and private condominiums that share a spa and other amenities and services.

2020 Vision/Goals

- Higher densities should be supported around existing and planned transit stations and along major street corridors.
- Lakefront access from Near North will improve with the expansion of the Lakefront park between North Avenue and Navy Pier, and new pedestrian connections between North Avenue and Navy Pier.
- The Division and Chicago Street corridors will mature as balanced auto and pedestrian corridors and will feature enhanced streetscapes.
- The Near North will maintain a high quality of life for residents supported by enforcement of parking, zoning and noise regulations to mitigate the impacts of the vibrant entertainment and tourism district in the southeast portion of Near North.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The Near North TIF, which covers a portion of the subdistrict, could fund a portion of the recommended corridor and transit improvements.

Development

- As development projects are proposed, traffic impact studies should consider individual projects in the larger context of other projects in development and planning in the neighborhood.

Regulatory

- The zoning code should be enhanced with performance standards for noise, vibration, traffic and waste management to facilitate compatibility of uses, where needed.
- Entertainment businesses and restaurants need to provide sufficient off-street parking, or be adjacent to available off-street parking.

NEAR NORTH

Urban Design

Signature Street – Division

Division is the key east-west street through the Near North and Cabrini Area. Unlike adjacent streets, Division provides uninterrupted access from Inner Lake Shore Drive and the Lakefront to the Chicago River and Kennedy Expressway. This street is undergoing massive change as high levels of new residential and commercial projects are being developed. With the associated increase in residential density, and the proposal for a new CTA Brown Line Station at Division, pedestrian and vehicular use of this street will increase.

Design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure NN-1 below):

- Street and sidewalk upgrades will improve the function and appearance of this street (see discussion of Streetscape improvements under Near North Projects).
- Planted medians should be considered along with minimum sidewalk widths of 14 feet.
- New buildings should be oriented along street frontage or setback lines with primary entrances oriented toward Division Street.
- Suburban development styles that feature parking lots between the street and building facades, such as Old Town Square, should be avoided in the future.
- Ground floor uses should include active uses such as retail in order to build and strengthen the pedestrian utilization of this corridor.

Image NN-4: The Division Corridor is expected to become a site for increased residential development.

Image NN-5: Streetscaping improvements are recommended to improve the pedestrian environment along Division.

Figure NN-1: Division Street Recommendations

NEAR NORTH

Image NN-6: The existing Brown/Purple Line elevated tracks at Division will be the site of a new CTA station.

Image NN-7: The recent LaSalle Streetscape project and its planted medians (shown above) should be emulated on Division.

Image NN-8: Lakefront Trail expansion will enhance the open space amenities for Near North residents.

Near North Projects

(see project map below)

1. CTA Infill Station (Division - Brown/Purple Line)

A new infill station on the elevated Brown/Purple Line tracks is needed near Division and Orleans. The only existing CTA rapid transit station in Near North is on the Red Line at Clark/Division. Goal: Complete by 2016.

2. CTA Station Modernization (Clark/Division - Red)

The Clark/Division (Red Line) station is programmed to be upgraded with new interior treatments, pedestrian access from LaSalle Street and improved platforms. Goal: Complete by 2012.

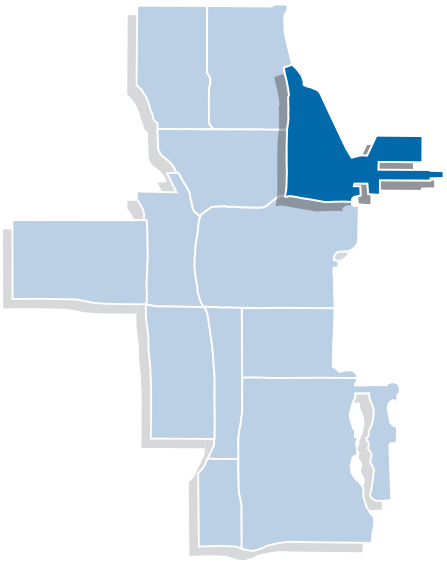
3. Division Streetscape

Division Street is a signature street that will anchor high levels of new private sector investment in housing and retail and should receive priority for streetscape enhancement funds. Streetscape elements should include wider sidewalks, street lighting, street trees, street furniture, improved crosswalks, bike lanes and possibly planted medians. These improvements should connect to the existing LaSalle Street streetscape. Goal: Complete by 2016.

Figure NN-2: Near North Projects

4. North Lake Shore Drive Improvements & Lakefront Trail Expansion

Roadway improvements to Lake Shore Drive, combined with a redesign of the Lakefront Trail between North Avenue and Navy Pier, will significantly improve traffic flow, safety and enjoyment of the Lakefront. The roadway will be relocated to the east, smoothing the sharp curve at Oak Street. Goal: Completed by 2016.



Streeterville

Streeterville is located north along the Lakefront, generally bounded on the north by Division Street, on the south by the Main Branch of the Chicago River, on the west by Michigan Avenue, and on the east by Lake Michigan.

Streeterville contains a mix of residential, institutional, hospitality, office, retail and entertainment uses. It features an established residential concentration at its northeastern edge, and a growing residential neighborhood along the Chicago River. The cluster of medical campuses located in Streeterville is a major economic engine of the Central Area, fueling much of the recent and anticipated job growth. The Museum of Contemporary Art, destination shopping on Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier are among the diverse cultural and tourism attractions.

STREETERVILLE

Image ST-1: McClurg Court north of the River provides a view of high-density residential area of Streeterville.

Image ST-2: Retail and commercial development continues to become more prevalent, including the AMC Theaters complex.

Image ST-3: The Streeterville skyline as seen from Navy Pier

Trends, 2000-2007

In 2000, Streeterville was the second most populated Central Area district with 15,421 residents. By 2007, even though Streeterville had grown to an estimated population of 19,398, it was the fourth most populated district behind the Near North, Near South and River North.

Northwestern Memorial Hospital has brought significant new investment to Streeterville. Since 1980, it has more than doubled its facilities on the 33-acre campus to nearly 9.8 million SF. Recent developments include the Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center and expanded visitor and employee parking facilities. In 2005, the hospital had approximately 6,500 full-time equivalent employees, and served 42,200 inpatient visitors and over 70,000 emergency room visitors. Overall, nearly 20,000 people visit the campus daily. The new Prentice Women's Hospital opened in October 2007.

Residential and commercial development continued at River East, a large planned development on the former Dock & Canal property. A 250,000-SF retail/entertainment center at River East includes 21 movie screens, and the adjoining Embassy Suites Hotel has 455 rooms. The mixed-use City-Front Plaza contains two residential towers and a Dominick's grocery store. On Michigan Avenue, the Palmolive Building was adapted for 102 condominium units.

A total of 761 hotel rooms have been added in Streeterville since 2000, including a Marriott Courtyard with over 300 rooms. While other commercial sectors expanded, office space in Streeterville and the North Michigan Avenue corridor contracted by more than one million square feet through conversions to other uses. This is indicative of Streeterville's comparatively weak competitive position in the downtown office market. A countervailing trend has been the leasing of office space by Northwestern Hospital in nearby office buildings as it continues to expand.

Forecast, 2008-2020

Children's Memorial Hospital is relocated from Lincoln Park to a new $750 million facility adjacent to the new Prentice Women's Hospital. It broke ground in 2008, is scheduled for completion in 2011, and is expected to treat over 12,000 patients a year. The hospital has 3,500 employees in its present location, and this is expected to grow at its new Streeterville campus.

With the strong pace of residential development, primarily in the southern portion of Streeterville, large development sites are becoming scarce. The former Kraft Building property on Peshtigo Court will be redeveloped, as will the former site of the CBS Studios on North McClurg Court. The 1,200-unit, 124-story Spire designed by Santiago Calatrava will add dramatically to Chicago's skyline and become the tallest building in North America.

Planning is underway for improvements to Navy Pier, which has developed into Chicago's most visited tourist attraction. With plans for new hotels, Streeterville will be positioned to attract even higher numbers of tourists and visitors in the future.

2020 Vision/Goals

- Northwestern Memorial Hospital and associated medical facilities will continue to expand and be a major contributor to Central Area employment growth.
- Streeterville will have many of its remaining vacant sites, including the large Veterans Administrations site, developed with a mixture of residential, retail and hospitality uses.
- Navy Pier will continue to be a vital element in the character and economic vitality of Streeterville and the Central Area.
- Expansion of the Lakefront Trail and straightening of the Oak Street curve on Lake Shore Drive will improve the safety and function of auto and pedestrian mobility in the area.
- The new Carroll Avenue and Lakefront Transitways will significantly

STREETERVILLE

improve access to the West Loop train stations, Millennium/Grant Parks and the Loop.
- A Lakefront Trail bridge over the Chicago River will improve the safety and function of this area and add vital connections to the Lake and nearby attractions.
- A high quality of life for Streeterville residents will be supported by provision of open space and performance standards that address noise, waste management, and other factors, and mitigate conflicts that may arise from the mix of residential with other uses.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive
- The City and neighborhood organizations should explore creation of business improvement or redevelopment districts to fund new services and selected capital projects. Currently there are no TIF districts in Streeterville.

Development
- Street rights-of-way should be expanded where feasible to improve traffic circulation.
- The scale and importance of recent and planned projects requires open communications between community groups and the City. Impacts on traffic, parking, and pedestrians must be studied and considered.
- Curb cuts on major east-west streets should be minimized, with alley access encouraged instead.

Regulatory
- Permissible zones for street entertainment in Streeterville should be defined.
- The Illinois-Grand Traffic Management Authority (TMA) should be reactivated to deal with important transportation issues.

Urban Design

Signature Streets – Grand Avenue & Illinois Street

The Grand Avenue and Illinois Street corridors serve important functions within the Central Area. These streets link Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier, and also serve new residential high rises, neighborhood stores and downtown entertainment venues.

Design recommendations for this corridor include the following:
- Streetscape enhancements are needed to establish a safe environment for neighborhood residents, as well as for pedestrians walking between Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier (see discussion of Streetscape improvements under Streeterville Projects).
- New, easily accessible pedestrian and handicapped access features are needed to move pedestrians between these lower level streets and Upper Michigan Avenue.
- A unique visual character that is distinguishable from adjacent areas should be established.
- Ground floor uses should include active uses such as retail in order to build and strengthen the pedestrian utilization of this corridor.

Streeterville Projects

(see project map, following page)

1. Carroll Avenue Transitway

This new transit corridor will connect the West Loop train stations, River North and Streeterville via a dedicated east-west right-of-way north of the Chicago River. In Streeterville, the transitway would use the existing street network to provide limited-stop service to Navy Pier, the Northwestern Hospital Campus, and other destinations. Goal: Complete by 2012.

2. Lakefront Transitway

Using an existing, improved right-of-way traveling north-south through Grant Park, this transit service will connect McCormick Place and Streeterville. In Streeterville, the service would connect to the Carroll Avenue Transitway. Goal: Complete by 2016.

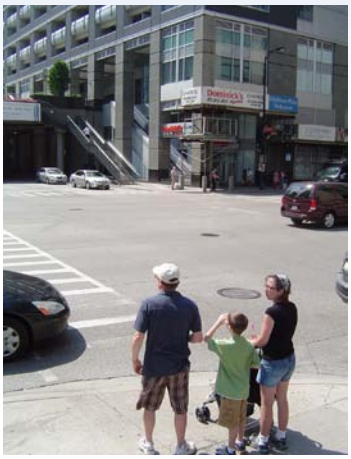


Image ST-4: Grand Avenue provides a poor visual image for Chicago in its current condition as a primary corridor for visitors between downtown and Navy Pier.

Image ST-5: The Grand/Illinois Corridor provides a direct connection to Navy Pier.

Image ST-6: Pedestrian crossings and wayfinding need to be improved.

STREETERVILLE

Image ST-7: A flyover bridge will remove the existing bottleneck on the Lakefront Trail

Image ST-8: The pedestrian and open space network along the River will be improved.

Figure ST-1: Streeterville Projects

3. Grand & Illinois Streetscape

Grand Avenue and Illinois Street are one-way streets that link Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier for both vehicles and pedestrians. New pedestrian and handicapped access features are needed to move pedestrians between the lower level streets and Michigan Avenue. Target streetscape amenities include street trees, planted medians, new lighting fixtures and improved crosswalks. Goal: Complete by 2012.

4. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

New bicycle lanes are planned for Grand and Illinois and should be undertaken as part of the streetscaping project in South Streeterville. Goal: Complete by 2020.

5. Main Branch Riverfront

Completion of the continuous Riverwalk along the Main Branch of the Chicago River would include underbridge connections at Michigan Avenue and Lake Shore Drive. Goal: Complete by 2016.

6. North Lakeshore Drive Improvements & Lakefront Trail Expansion

Roadway improvements to Lake Shore Drive, combined with a redesign of the Lakefront Trail north of Navy Pier, will significantly improve traffic flow, safety and enjoyment of the Lakefront. The roadway will be relocated to the east, smoothing the sharp curve at Oak Street. These improvements will also allow the Chicago Avenue and Lake Shore Drive intersection to be rebuilt to improve access to the Northwestern Memorial and Children's Memorial Hospital campuses, in particular. Goal: Feasibility study completed by 2010, Lakefront improvements completed by 2016.

7. Lakefront Trail Bridge

A pedestrian and bicycle bridge over the Main Branch of the Chicago River will address a major bottleneck and safety concern for bikers, runners, and walkers. While the Lakefront Trail is separated from street traffic throughout the Central Area, in this location trail users are currently directed along a sidewalk. The pedestrian bridge also connects to DuSable Park. Goal: Complete by 2016.

8. DuSable Park

The building of DuSable Park will be coordinated with the completion of The Spire. The park will be accessible from the new pedestrian bridge. Goal: Complete by 2012.

9. Gateway Harbor

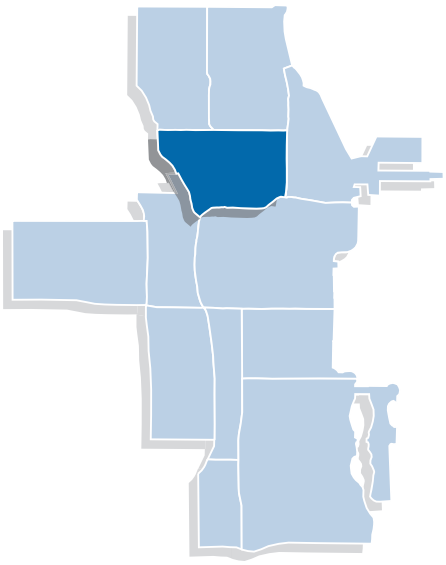
Gateway Harbor, adjacent to Navy Pier, will draw larger crafts and attract boaters from the entire Great Lakes Region. Goal: Complete by 2012.

10. Expand Water Taxi Service

In Streeterville, options will be explored for extending service to directly serve the southern edge of Navy Pier if access is created to the Chicago River. Goal: Complete by 2016.

11. Pedestrian Bridge Over River

Dedicated pedestrian bridge connecting the Central Loop to Streeterville (over the Chicago River) would ease pedestrian congestion at a key point in the area. Goal: Complete by 2020.



River North

River North has a north central riverfront location and is bounded on the north by Chicago Avenue, on the south by the Main Branch of the Chicago River, on the east by Michigan Avenue, and on the west by the North Branch of the Chicago River.

River North contains a mix of land uses, including office, residential, entertainment, hospitality, arts and retail, with small enclaves of institutional uses. Residential uses are becoming increasingly concentrated in the northwestern portion of River North, while a mixed entertainment, restaurant, retail and tourism district emanates from the Michigan Avenue Magnificent Mile on the eastern edge of the subdistrict. Major office developments are occurring along the southern edge of River North, a district which is anchored by the Merchandise Mart.

RIVER NORTH

Image RN-1: The North Branch riverfront has become a major residential development zone.

Figure RN-2: The former Montgomery Ward headquarters has been transformed into The Montgomery, a condominium tower.

Image RN-3: Erie Park has provided needed open space along the River.

Trends, 2000-2007

With over 6,000 new residential units, River North experienced the Central Area's second-highest level of residential growth since 2000. The population of River North more than doubled, and grew to an estimated 20,599 in 2007 (up from 9,466 in 2000). While residential development occurred throughout River North, activity was heaviest along the North Branch of the River, which contained the southern portion of the former Montgomery Ward Campus and old industrial sites ideal for redevelopment. Erie Park along the North Branch provided needed open space in this new neighborhood. Further east in River North, the Cathedral District emerged with the completion of projects such as the Fordham (247 units) and 55 East Erie (214 units). Another development cluster in the heart of River North centered around Grand Plaza, which contains two residential towers with over 100,000 SF of retail space anchored by a Jewel grocery store.

The Magnificent Mile was bolstered by the addition of NorthBridge, the largest retail addition to the Central Area during this period. The historic Medinah Temple became the 130,000-SF Bloomingdale's Home Store, as retail activity spilled over to Wabash, State and Ontario. River North captured roughly 30% of Central Area hotel rooms developed since 2000, with the single largest addition coming in 2001 with the completion of the 339-room Peninsula Hotel, a tower built over an existing retail development.

The area's office inventory grew by 1.3 million SF between 2000 and 2007, with major developments clustered near the River at the southern edge of the River North district. The Reid-Murdoch Building, which had housed Chicago's traffic court, was renovated for 280,000 SF of office space with additional ground level retail space.

Forecast, 2008-2020

Residential development in River North is expected to continue, particularly in the western portion where sites are more readily available.

Six other hotels are proposed or under construction in River North, including the 339-room Trump International Hotel.

Two major office towers, 300 North LaSalle and the second phase of River North Center, are now under construction on sites north of the Chicago River. These projects will add another 2.4 million SF of office space.

Plans for Wolf Point include three towers that will house 350 hotel rooms, 1,500 condominium units, 850 rental units and 1 million SF of office space. The tallest tower is envisioned to be 89 stories tall and will provide a major visual focal point at the southern corner of the district.

2020 Vision/Goals

- River North will continue to mix restaurant, retail, entertainment, office, hotel, and residential uses.
- The character of the Gallery, Courthouse, and Mart districts will be maintained through sensitive rehabilitation and development controls.
- The Ontario/Grand corridor will feature new residential buildings with retail, restaurant, entertainment and other commercial uses at street level.
- The Chicago Avenue corridor will add high-density residential development to its vibrant mix of uses, particularly around the transit stations.
- LaSalle Street will attract residential and hotel development.
- High-density office and mixed-use development will line the Chicago River's Main Branch.
- High-density residential development will continue along the North Branch of the Chicago River.
- New parks will provide open space for the growing residential and office populations.

RIVER NORTH

Policies & Actions

Regulatory

- Rights-of-way for the Carroll Avenue Transitway must be preserved as new development projects are undertaken adjacent to the designated route.
- The Ohio/Wabash TIF may provide funding for River North infrastructure projects.
- Performance standards should address noise, waste management, and other factors to mitigate conflicts that may arise from the mix of residential with other uses.

Culture

- The City should continue to support special events such as block parties and tours.

Urban Design

Wolf Point

Wolf Point is located at the confluence of the Main, North and South Branches of the Chicago River adjacent to the Merchandise and Apparel Marts. Opportunity sites in this area also include land west of the Chicago River. This is one of the most visible development sites in downtown.

Design recommendations for this area include the following (see Figure RN-1 at right):

- Building height recommendations include utilization of Wolf Point for a signature building that is taller than buildings on adjacent parcels. A target height in the 80 -story range is recommended with an adjacent building target height in the 50-story range.
- The natural character of the riverfront edge on Wolf Point should be maintained to balance and complement the hard edge character of adjacent developments.
- Pedestrian access via land, and potentially water, should be incorporated.

Signature Streets – Grand Avenue & Illinois Street

Grand Avenue and Illinois Street corridors serve important functions within the Central Area. These streets provide linkage between areas west of Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier, as well as anchor high levels of new residential development, neighborhood stores and downtown entertainment venues.

Design recommendations for this corridor include the following:

- Streetscape enhancements are needed to establish a safe environment for neighborhood residents, as well as for pedestrians walking between shopping and hotel development located in River North and Navy Pier (see discussion of Streetscape improvements under River North Projects).
- A unique visual character that is distinguishable from adjacent areas should be established.

Image RN-4: Wolf Point is located at the confluence of the Main, North and South Branches of the Chicago River.

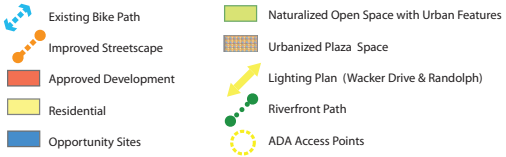
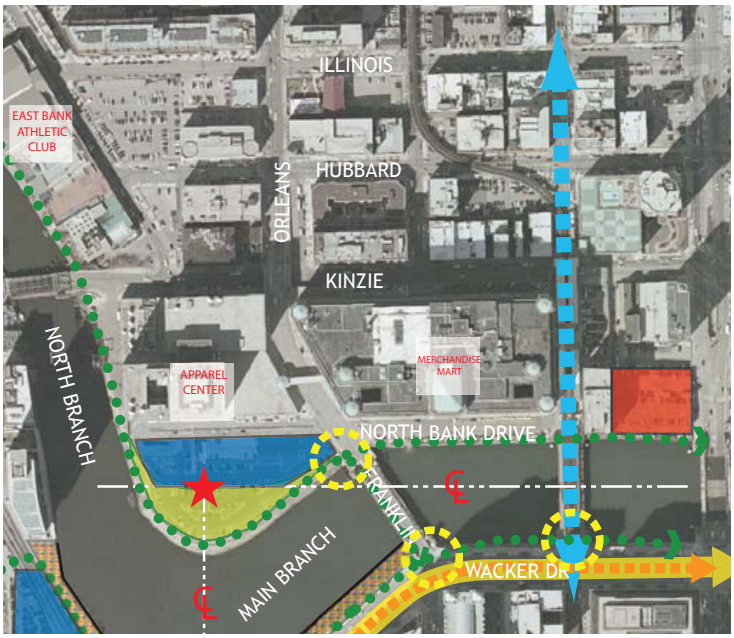


Figure RN-1: Wolf Point



RIVER NORTH

Image RN-5: The Carroll Avenue Transitway will directly connect River North with Streeterville and the West Loop.

Image RN-6: Modernization of the Grand Red Line Station will improve platforms and mezzanines.

River North Projects

(see project map below)

1. Carroll Avenue Transitway

This new transit corridor will link River North residents and workers to Streeterville and the West Loop train stations. With a dedicated east-west right-of-way at the north edge of the Chicago River, station stops in River North will be along the below-grade right-of-way. Goal: Complete by 2012.

2. CTA Station Modernization (Grand -Red)

The modernization of the Grand Red Line station will begin in 2008, bringing improved access, a new mezzanine level, and a better platform environment. Goal: Complete by 2012.

3. Grand & Illinois Streetscape

Improvements have begun along Grand and Illinois, one-way streets that link Michigan Ave and Navy Pier. New pedestrian and handicapped access features are needed to move pedestrians easily and safely from lower level streets up to Upper Michigan Avenue. Streetscape elements include trees, light fixtures, improved crosswalks and possibly planted medians between Navy Pier and LaSalle. Goal: Complete by 2012.

4. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

New bike lanes along Kinzie, Illinois, and Grand will be coordinated with Streetscaping projects and connect to existing lanes at Wells and Dearborn. Goal: Complete by 2020.

5. Main Branch and North Branch Riverfront

The River North section of the Riverwalk includes a pedestrian walkway and open space. The North Branch has several existing points of access needs that need to be connected, with improvements proposed for the east sides of the River and Goose Island. Goal: Complete by 2016.

6. Clinton Subway

The Clinton Subway, located below Larrabee and Kingsbury, has potential for stations near Chicago and Grand. The new line will connect River North to West Loop and provide residents with improved access to the Metra/Amtrak train terminals. Goal: Complete by 2020.

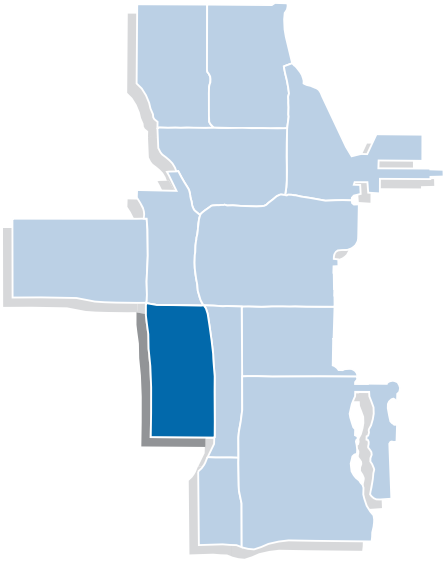
7. Fort Dearborn Park

A new open space to serve the fast growing River North population. The City is will partner with a private developer to redevelop the square block site currently occupied by the Fort Dearborn Post Office. Part of the redevelopment will include the construction of a new public open space. Goal: Complete by 2020.

8. Expand Water Taxi Service

Water taxi service will be extended along the North Branch as far as Chicago Avenue and Goose Island. Goal: Complete by 2016.

Figure RN-2: River North Projects



South West Loop

The South West Loop is bounded on the north by Congress Parkway, on the south by 16th Street, on the east by the South Branch of the Chicago River and on the west by the Dan Ryan Expressway.

The South West Loop contains light industrial and back office/service operation uses, with significant new retail development along the Roosevelt Road corridor. Zoning in the subdistrict is committed to protecting the existing non-residential uses, and as of 2007 fewer than 1,200 people lived in the South West Loop, making it the least populated subdistrict in the Central Area.

SOUTH WEST LOOP

Image SW-1: The new Cook County Family Justice Courthouse.

Image SW-2: Roosevelt west of the River has attracted retailers serving the Central Area's growing residential population.

Image SW-3: The Maxwell Street Market will be moving to a new site along Des Plaines Street in the South West Loop.

Trends, 2000-2007

Consistent with the 2003 Central Area Plan, Roosevelt Road has joined Michigan Avenue and State Street as a major retail corridor in the Central Area. Whole Foods, DSW, Home Depot, Best Buy, Panera Bread, and Starbucks are among the new offerings along Roosevelt Road.

These projects have followed in the example of South Loop Marketplace, anchored by a Dominick's grocery store, which opened in 1998 and provided the first new shopping south of Congress Boulevard.

The new Cook County Family Justice Courthouse is an important institutional development located in the South West Loop at Clinton and Harrison Streets.

Forecast, 2008-2020

As of 2008, 550,000 SF of retail is under construction for the South West Loop, with additional projects being planned.

The Maxwell Street market is scheduled to move within the district from Canal Street to DesPlaines Street.

2020 Vision/Goals

- The Roosevelt Road corridor will offer contemporary urban retail serving the residents of surrounding districts, as well as a broader Chicago market.
- Back-office, light industrial and distribution uses will remain as compatible neighbors to the new retailers and as providers of critical services to the Downtown business district.
- While active rail yards along the River will continue to be a predominant land use, rail-adjacent parcels are likely to be part of new development projects.
- The South West Loop will be better connected to the Central Loop, River South and Near South by street and pedestrian connections that cross the South Branch of the River at several locations.
- Public transportation in the South West Loop will be improved to include new rail station(s) along Clinton Street that provide direct service into the West Loop.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The Jefferson/Roosevelt TIF and Roosevelt/Canal TIF funds should continue to make a priority of additional River crossings and extension of the grid system.

Regulatory

- Current zoning in South West Loop does not allow residential developments and permits greater density than typical uses require. Up-zoning could be incorrectly perceived as future willingness to allow office and residential uses that are not permitted and would not be desirable.

SOUTH WEST LOOP

Urban Design

Signature Street – Congress Parkway

The role and function of Congress Parkway is changing due to the development of student housing at University Center, high levels of market rate residential development in adjacent areas of the South Loop, and expanding office functions in the area associated with the financial industry and government services. Congress Parkway is transforming from a predominantly auto-oriented function to one that must accommodate high levels of pedestrian mobility. Development proposals for areas immediately south of Congress along the Chicago River will further increase pedestrian traffic.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure SW-1 below):

- Congress Parkway streetscape enhancements should include strategies to buffer pedestrians from vehicular traffic and provide safer intersection crossing conditions.
- New street lights, landscape, focal point features and wayfinding signage should be incorporated.

Signature Street – Roosevelt

Roosevelt Road is undergoing massive change as a subregional shopping anchor for Chicago's South Side. High levels of residential development in the South Loop and Near South, as well as new retail development west of the Chicago River in the South West Loop, have resulted in increased vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian foot traffic within this corridor.

The visual character of Roosevelt is appealing as the result of high levels of investment by the city in the bridge design and associated streetscape.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure SW-2 below):

- Focus on the pedestrian orientation of new commercial development along Roosevelt, as well as pedestrian access from Roosevelt into development sites immediately north and south of the corridor.
- Wide sidewalks and bike lanes that connect to Roosevelt should be incorporated into each development scheme.

Image SW-4: Congress Parkway provides western access into the Central Area through the Old Post Office, which is proposed for mixed-use redevelopment as pictured.

Image SW-5: The cluster of retail along Roosevelt is expected to grow, and sites should be developed to accommodate safe pedestrian access and circulation.

Figure SW-1: Congress Parkway Urban Design Recommendations

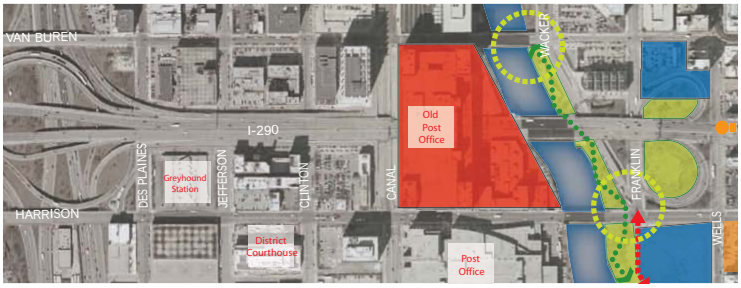
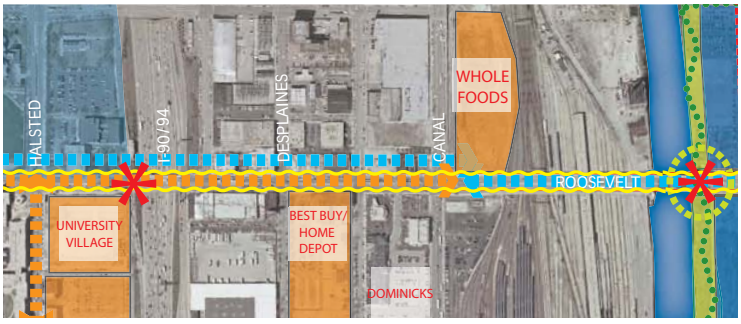


Figure SW-2: Roosevelt Road Urban Design Recommendations



SOUTH WEST LOOP

Image SW-6: The rail tracks and yards that cover much of the South West Loop and feed into Chicago Union Station.

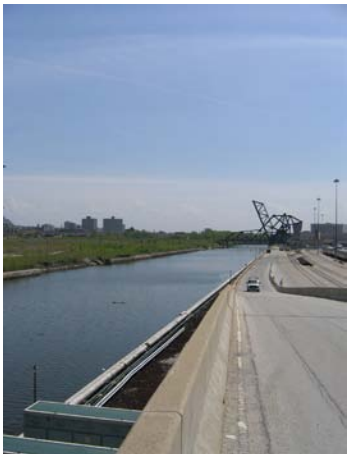


Image SW-7: The River edge through the South West Loop will be improved aesthetically, but pedestrian access will be discouraged.

South West Loop Projects

(see project map below)

1. South Branch Bridges

Along the River on the south side of the Central Area, the street grid is interrupted. As development continues in River South and the South West Loop, east-west connections at Polk, Taylor and/or 16th Street may be needed. Initial progress has been made on the Taylor Street Bridge in the form of a bridge approach east of Canal Street. Goal: Complete Taylor by 2016, with additional bridges at Polk or 16th completed by 2020.

2. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

A new bicycle lane is planned for Taylor Street, with extensions of existing bicycle lanes along Clinton and Canal. Goal: Complete by 2020.

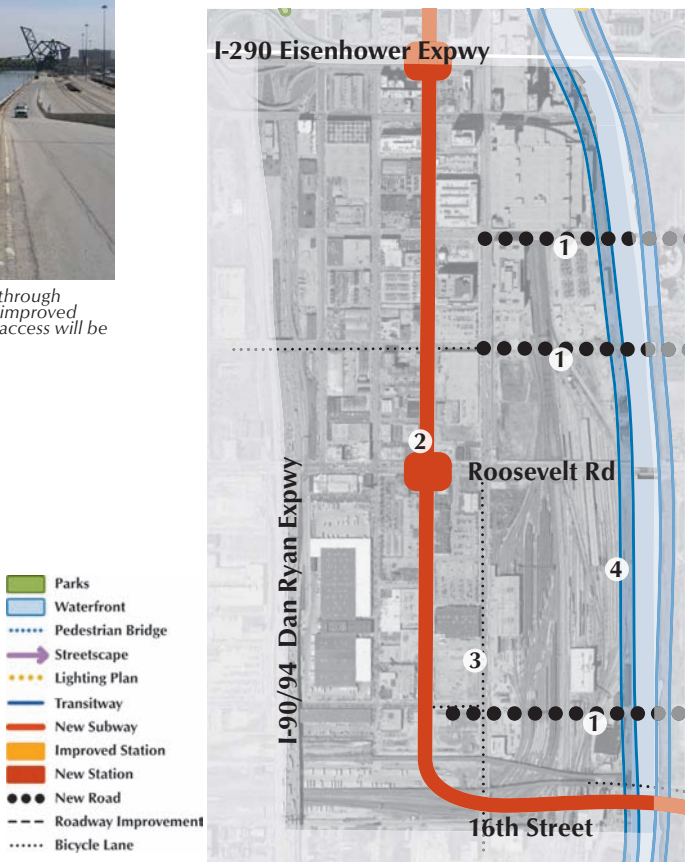
3. Clinton Subway

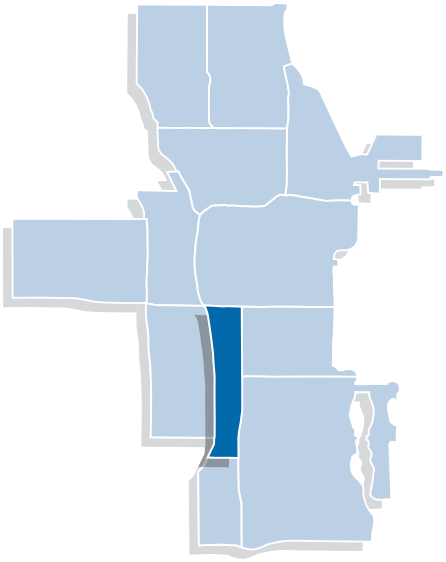
In the South West Loop, the Clinton subway line would generally be located beneath Clinton Street, with a potential station located on Roosevelt. Goal: Complete by 2020.

4. South Branch Riverfront

In the South West Loop, the western riverbank should be enhanced visually, though pedestrian access will not be encouraged. Goal: Complete by 2020.

Figure SW-3: South West Loop Project Map





River South

River South is bounded on the north by Congress Parkway, on the south by 18th Street, on the east by Clark Street and on the west by the South Branch of the Chicago River.

This area was formerly a freight railroad corridor, and currently contains large tracts of vacant land targeted for residential and mixed-use redevelopment. River South contains three major planned developments (PDs): 62-acre Riverside Park, 22-acre LaSalle Park and 8-acre Franklin Point. The Roosevelt Road retail corridor runs through the district.

RIVER SOUTH

Image RS-1: River South contains the largest collection of large undeveloped parcels in the Central Area, including some near the south edge of the Loop.

Image RS-2: The new Target store at Clark is part of the developing Roosevelt Road retail corridor.

Image RS-3: The major existing residential concentration in River South is contained within River City, along the South Branch.

Trends, 2000-2007

The first phase of the LaSalle Park planned development (PD) was the Target store at Roosevelt and Clark, which opened in 2005. This 130,000-SF store is an anchor to the emerging Roosevelt Road retail corridor.

No residential developments have been completed since 2000, keeping the population of River South at nearly 2,000 residents. New developments included the 233-unit Vetro located on South Wells and Amli 900 with 440 rental apartments.

Forecast, 2008-2020

The Roosevelt Collection, a mixed-use development within the LaSalle Park planned development, is under construction and will include 420,000 SF of retail, 600 condominiums, a 4,200-seat cinema and a three-acre park.

With a change in ownership of the Riverside Park property, plans for 3,500 residential units and 650,000 SF of retail and commercial space are on hold. Franklin Point also changed ownership and awaits a new plan.

Development of the existing PDs, which require major infrastructure improvements, is likely to continue through 2020. While large PDs cover most of River South, some additional sites remain.

2020 Vision/Goals

- The area along the east bank of the South Branch of the Chicago River will undergo a dramatic transformation, as residential and retail developments replace former rail yards.
- River South will become a transportation, recreational and open space amenity for the Central Area, providing a Riverfront link between the Central Loop and Chinatown.
- River South will play an important role in the continued development of Roosevelt Road as a major retail corridor.
- The street grid network will be introduced to River South, including roadway connections west across the River and south to the Expressway.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The River South TIF has already funded major infrastructure work, providing a good example of directed infrastructure investments.
- TIF revenues should continue to be used toward the other capital projects that are in planning or design stages.

Regulatory

- Existing zoning in River South is appropriate.

Urban Design

Franklin Point

Franklin Point is the area immediately south of Congress Parkway along the east bank of the Chicago River. This area will likely undergo significant change in the near future linked to the CBOT/CME merger, and the plan to office at the current Board of Trade location just north of Congress Parkway. Large development sites exist that are suitable for mixed-use, residential development.

The Wells-Wentworth Connector will link Wells Street north of Polk Street to the Dan Ryan Expressway south of Cermak Road, providing an alternative route into and out of Downtown. This road, in addition to opportunities to bridge the Chicago River at Taylor and Polk Streets, subdivides large parcels into an orderly set of development parcels and provides a grid system to enhance mobility in this area.

RIVER SOUTH

Urban design recommendations for this area include the following (see *Figure RS-1* at right):

- New development with river frontage must be designed to establish a visually interesting and pedestrian-friendly environment along the Chicago River.
- In addition to the 30-foot minimum setback requirement, development should incorporate larger areas of open space with passive recreational uses and destination development such as restaurants and taverns.
- Public access to the riverfront should be guaranteed and new development should include pedestrian connections to riverfront features on adjacent properties.

Signature Street – Congress Parkway

The role and function of Congress Parkway is changing due to the development of student housing at University Center, high levels of residential development in adjacent areas of the South Loop, and expanding office functions in the area associated with the financial industry and government services. Congress Parkway needs to be upgraded to accommodate pedestrian mobility while maintaining its role as a key east-west vehicle arterial.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure RS-2 below):

- Congress Parkway streetscape enhancements should include strategies to buffer pedestrians from vehicular traffic and provide safer intersection crossing conditions.
- New street lights, landscape, focal point features and wayfinding signage should be incorporated.

Signature Street – Roosevelt

Roosevelt Road is undergoing massive change as a subregional shopping anchor for Chicago's South Side. High levels of residential development in the South Loop and Near South, and new retail development west of the Chicago River in the South West Loop are resulting in increased vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian foot traffic within this corridor.

The visual character of Roosevelt is appealing as the result of high levels of investment by the city in the bridge design and associated streetscape.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure RS-1 at right):

- New commercial development along Roosevelt should feature a pedestrian orientation, and pedestrian access should be considered from Roosevelt into development sites immediately north and south of the corridor.
- Wide sidewalks and bike lanes that connect to Roosevelt should be incorporated into each development scheme.

Figure RS-1: Franklin Point and Roosevelt Road Recommendations

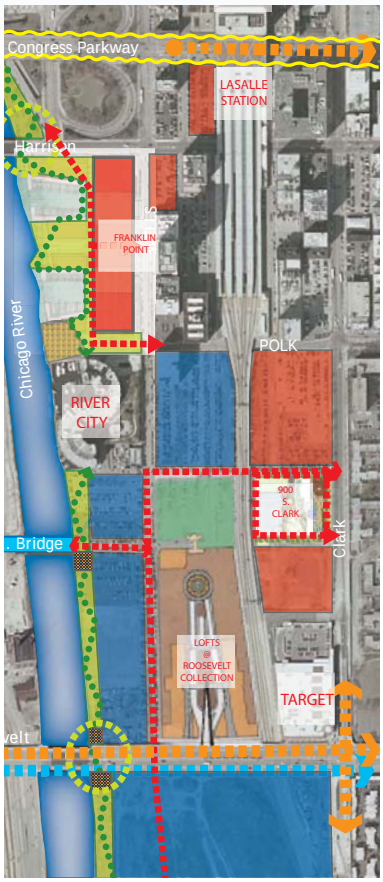
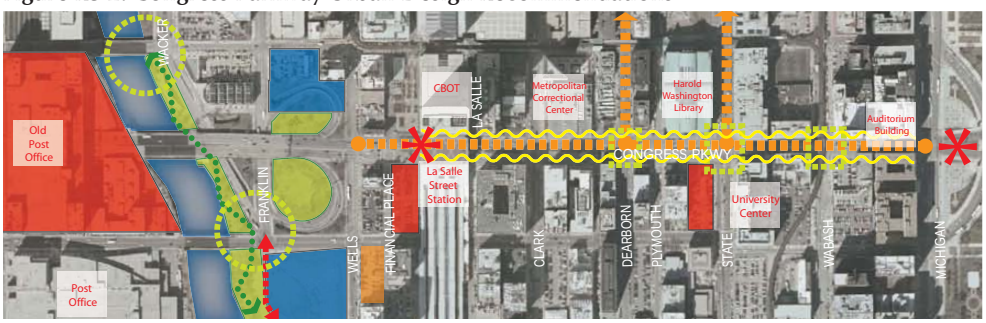


Figure RS-2: Congress Parkway Urban Design Recommendations



RIVER SOUTH

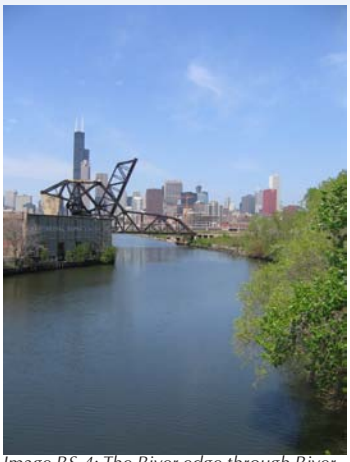
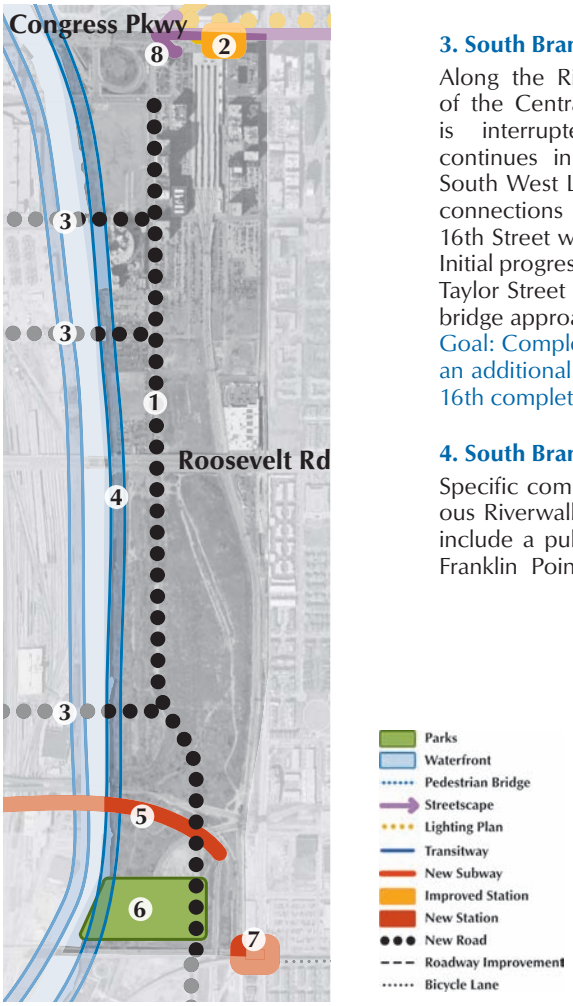


Image RS-4: The River edge through River South offers numerous opportunities to extend the Riverfront open space system.

Figure RS-3: River South Project Map



River South Projects

(see project map below left)

1. Wells-Wentworth Connector

The Wells-Wentworth connector creates a north-south arterial through River South and Chinatown to connect the areas along the South Branch of the River to the Central Loop. In Chinatown, the southern end of this new arterial will provide access to the Dan Ryan Expressway. Goal: Complete first phase (Harrison to 18th Street) by 2012, with continuation south to Cermak by 2016.

2. CTA Station Modernization (LaSalle/Congress - Blue)

The LaSalle/Congress (Blue Line) Station located at the northern edge of River South is scheduled for upgrades. Goal: Complete LaSalle/Congress modernization by 2020.

3. South Branch Bridges

Along the River on the south side of the Central Area, the street grid is interrupted. As development continues in River South and the South West Loop, creating east-west connections at Polk, Taylor and/or 16th Street will improve accessibility. Initial progress has been made on the Taylor Street Bridge, in the form of a bridge approach east of Canal Street. Goal: Complete Taylor by 2016, with an additional bridge at either Polk or 16th completed by 2020.

4. South Branch Riverfront

Specific components of the continuous Riverwalk system in River South include a public park as part of the Franklin Point development, pedestrian crossings at Taylor and Polk Streets and visual enhancement of the western riverbank. Goal: Complete by 2020.

5. Clinton Subway

The Clinton Street Subway would join the Red Line north of the current Chinatown-Cermak Station. Goal: Complete by 2020.

6. Ping Tom Park Phase II

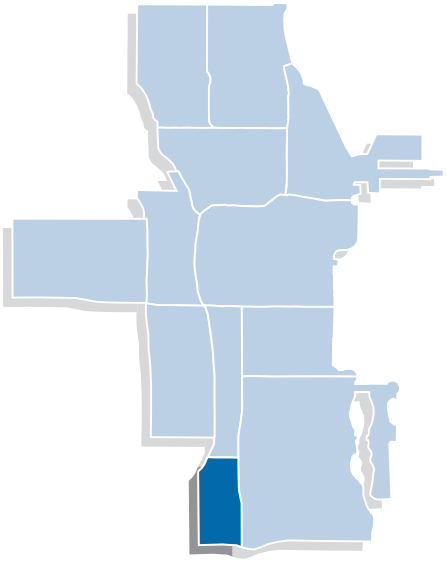
Ping Tom Park is located at 19th Street and the Chicago River. As one of the largest neighborhood parks in the City of Chicago, Ping Tom Park may also be an ideal location for cultural, educational and other public facilities. Goal: Complete by 2016.

7. CTA Infill Station Clark/18th - Orange)

An infill station on the elevated Orange Line tracks would improve access to the Central Loop and Midway Airport from the Near South and Chinatown. Currently, Orange Line stations are located more than two miles apart at Roosevelt and Halsted. This station may also be an element of the CTA Circle Line project. Goal: Complete by 2020.

8. Congress Parkway Streetscape

The streetscape project on Congress will improve the pedestrian environment in the important east-west thoroughfare along the north edge of River South. A streetscaping project (currently under design) would include trees, planted medians, new lighting fixtures, improved crosswalks and bicycle signage extending from Michigan Avenue to Wells Street. Goal: Complete by 2012.



Chinatown

Chinatown is bounded on the north by 18th Street, on the south by the Stevenson Expressway, on the east by Clark Street and on the west by the South Branch of the Chicago River and Stewart Avenue.

This area is a stable mix of residential, retail, and some light industrial uses. The residential population in this subdistrict is almost exclusively Chinese-American, and the accompanying collection of authentic Chinese stores and restaurants has become a major tourist attraction in the Central Area and destination for Chicago residents.

CHINATOWN

Image CT-1: The Chinese-American Service League building is a new landmark in the neighborhood.

Image CT-2: New residential development in Chinatown has typically been in the form of townhomes or low-rise condominiums.

Image CT-3: Chinatown is a unique cultural and tourism resource in the Central Area.

Trends, 2000-2007

Chinatown residents represented about 3.2% of Central Area households in 2007. Between 2000 and 2007, the population grew from 4,434 residents to an estimated 5,305 residents. With the subdistrict largely built out, the Chinese-American community has expanded into neighboring communities to the south and west.

The first phase of Ping Tom Park added an important open space and recreational amenity for Chinatown residents and visitors. The Chinese-American Service League building and Chinese-American Museum are development highlights of recent years.

Forecast, 2008-2020

A new hotel announced for a site at Clark and Archer will support commercial and tourism development.

However, with limited infill development sites and lower allowable densities, small-scale residential redevelopment will continue to be the primary development activity in Chinatown.

2020 Vision/Goals

- Chinatown will thrive as a distinct residential community and visitor destination.
- The developing Cermak corridor will connect Chinatown residents with the Lakefront and link visitors from McCormick Place and Motor Row to Chinatown to patronize its shops and restaurants.
- Development will include mid-density housing, hotels and ground-floor retail.
- The district will continue to accommodate small-scale industrial and commercial uses.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentives

- The Chinatown Basin and Archer Courts TIFs, as well as portions of the River South and 24th/Michigan TIFs, fall within Chinatown and may provide funding for development projects, streetscapes, and park improvements.
- The City should promote Small Business Improvement Funds (SBIF) in the Chinatown Basin TIF District, in support of the district's many small-business entrepreneurs.

CHINATOWN

Urban Design

Signature Street – Cermak Road

Cermak is an important street that anchors McCormick Place and Motor Row within the Near South and also provides the primary east-west connection between Chinatown and the Lakefront.

Recent streetscape enhancements have improved the visual appeal of this corridor, but additional urban design recommendations include (see Figure CT-1 below):

- New buildings should be oriented towards Cermak in order to establish a pleasant streetwall for pedestrians.
- Cermak should tie into the charming scale of development and mix of entertainment uses concentrated in Motor Row and Chinatown, as well as areas immediately north along Wabash.

Image CT-4: Ping Tom Park is the focal point of the Riverfront in Chinatown, and improved access to this park should be provided from the neighborhood and along the River.

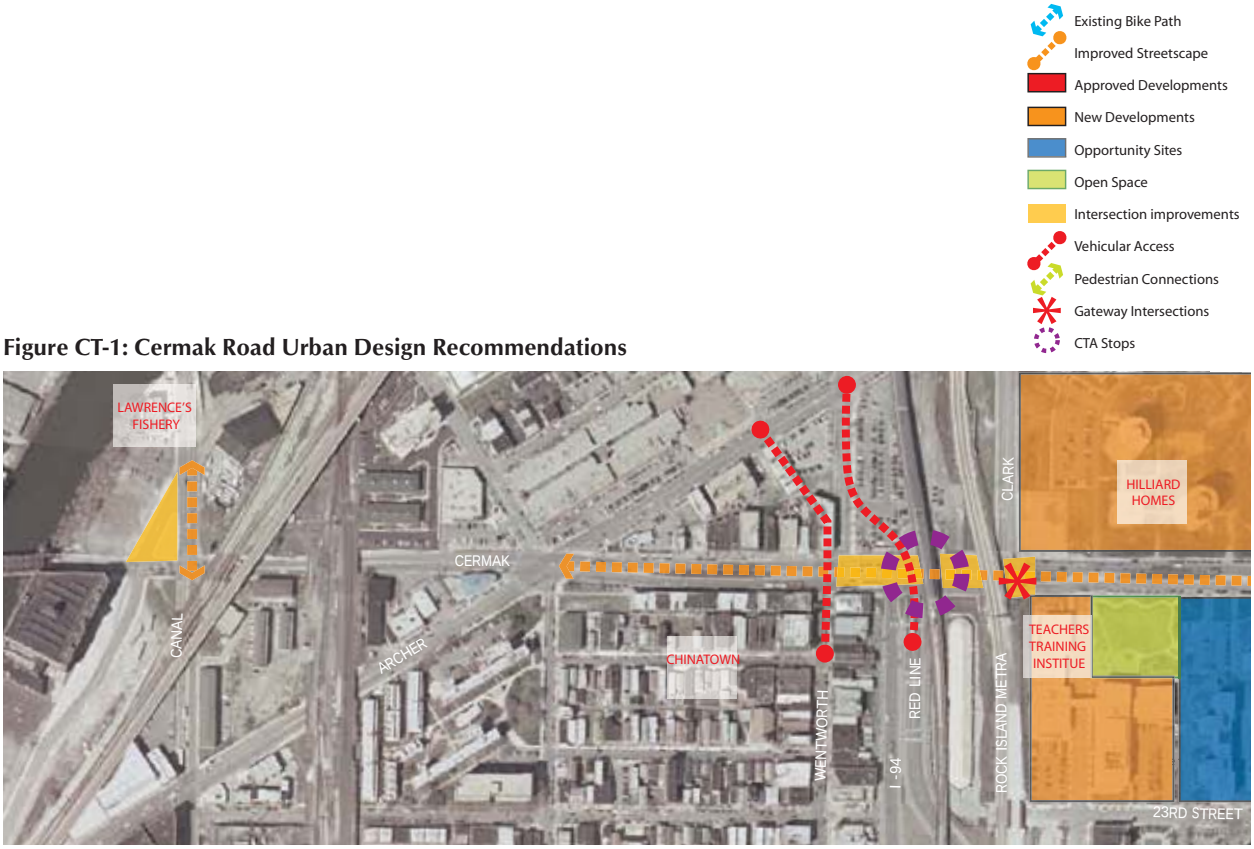


Figure CT-1: Cermak Road Urban Design Recommendations

CHINATOWN

Image CT-5: Cermak Road is a busy pedestrian street and the streetscape should provide a safe and walkable environment.

Image CT-6: Access to Chinatown by auto will be improved by the Wells-Wentworth Connector.

Image CT-7: Pedestrian and bicycle safety need to be prioritized in this popular tourism district.

Chinatown Projects

(see project map below)

1. Wells-Wentworth Connector

The Wells-Wentworth connector creates a north-south arterial through River South and Chinatown to connect the areas along the South Branch of the River to the Central Loop. In Chinatown, the southern end of this new arterial would provide access to the Dan Ryan Expressway entrance and exit ramps. Goal: Complete by 2016.

2. CTA Infill Station Clark/18th - Orange)

An infill station on the elevated Orange Line tracks would improve access to the Central Loop and Midway Airport from the Near South and Chinatown. Currently, Orange Line stations are located more than two miles apart at Roosevelt and Halsted. This station may also be an element of the CTA Circle Line project. Goal: Complete by 2020.

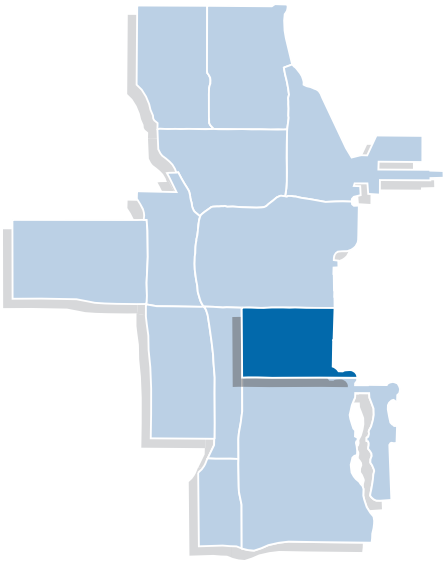
3. South Branch Riverfront

Ping Tom Park has created a destination for the southern end of the Riverwalk. Plans include Ping Tom Park Phase II and visual enhancement of the western riverbank. Goal: Complete by 2020.

4. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

New bicycle lanes are planned for Archer Avenue. Goal: Complete by 2020.

Figure CT-2: Chinatown Project Map



South Loop

The South Loop planning district is bounded on the north by Congress Parkway, on the south by Roosevelt Road, on the east by Lake Michigan and on the west by Clark Street.

South Loop has a diverse mix of land uses, including retail, institutional and educational developments, residential and parks. Several universities and colleges, with enrollment of 52,000 full- and part-time students, are located just north of the South Loop subdistrict and are now purchasing and developing sites in the South Loop for expansion.

SOUTH LOOP

Image SL-1: University Center provides 1,700 dormitory beds for Columbia College, DePaul University and Roosevelt University.

Image SL-2: The Michigan Avenue Corridor facing Grant Park has seen significant institutional and residential redevelopment.

Image SL-3: Access to the Lakefront has been improved with a Lake Shore Drive underpass at Roosevelt.

Trends, 2000-2007

The population of the subdistrict expanded from 6,219 in 2000 to an estimated 10,067 by 2007.

Educational institutions continued to expand, and new student housing contributed to the distinct character of the South Loop. University Center, completed in 2004, provides 1,700 dormitory beds for Columbia College, DePaul University and Roosevelt University.

A 10-story home for Spertus Institute on Michigan Avenue was completed in 2007. Reopened after a full renovation, the Blackstone Hotel helps meet demand from tourists and McCormick Place visitors.

State Place, a mixed-use project with 243 housing units and 70,000 SF of retail space, was completed at State and Roosevelt.

Larger new-construction residential development projects included the 170-unit Wells Street Tower at 701 South Wells, the 247-unit 1111 South Wabash and the 220-unit Colombian at Roosevelt Road and Michigan Avenue.

Forecast, 2008-2020

Surface parking lots provide most of the opportunities for current and future infill development. Redevelopment sites include 901 South State, 1001 South State, 1140 South Wabash and 830 South Michigan.

Columbia College's expansion plans include adaptive-reuse and new-construction buildings in the South Loop.

Tall residential buildings along and behind Michigan Avenue, such as and 46-story Colombian, will enjoy views of Grant Park and the Lakefront. Smaller infill projects such as the 88-unit Printers Corner on West Polk, are oriented to historic Printers Row.

2020 Vision/Goals

- The South Loop will continue its role as an expansion area for the concentration of high learning institutions in the southwest loop.
- Residential projects, which may include ground-level retail, will take advantage of the diminishing supply of infill opportunity sites.
- Situated between Millennium Park and McCormick Place, South Loop will expand its hotel segment, which is currently anchored by the Chicago Hilton & Towers.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentives

- Portions of the River South TIF and Near South TIF fall within the South Loop and can help fund infrastructure and transportation investments.

Development

- As the South Loop builds out, site assembly may be necessary to assist institutional expansion needs.

Regulatory

- The parking policy in the South Loop merits review as surface lots give way to new development. Minimum parking ratios may not be creating enough spaces for visitors and business customers and, therefore, contributing to localized parking shortages and circulation problems.

Urban Design

Signature Street – Congress Parkway

The role and function of Congress Parkway is changing due to the development of student housing at University Center, high levels of residential development in adjacent areas of the South Loop, and expanding office functions in the area associated with the financial industry and government services. Congress Parkway needs to be upgraded to accommodate high levels of pedestrian mobility while also maintaining its role as a key east/west vehicle arterial. Develop-

SOUTH LOOP

ment proposals for areas immediately south of Congress along the Chicago River will further increase pedestrian traffic.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure SL-1 below):

- Congress Parkway streetscape enhancements should include strategies to buffer pedestrians from vehicular traffic and provide safer intersection crossing conditions.
- New street lights, landscape, focal point features and way-finding signage should be incorporated.

Signature Street – Roosevelt

Roosevelt Road is undergoing massive change as a subregional shopping anchor for Chicago's South Side. High levels of residential development in the South Loop and Near South, and high levels of new retail development west of the Chicago River in the South West Loop, are resulting in increased vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian foot traffic within this corridor.

The visual character of Roosevelt is good as the result of high levels of investment by the city in the bridge design and associated streetscape.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure SL-2 below):

- Focus on the pedestrian orientation of new commercial development along Roosevelt as well as pedestrian access from Roosevelt into development sites immediately north and south of the corridor.
- Wide sidewalks and bike lanes that connect to Roosevelt should be incorporated into each development scheme.

Image SL-4: Roosevelt Road has recently seen streetscape investments.

Figure SL-1: Congress Parkway Urban Design Recommendations

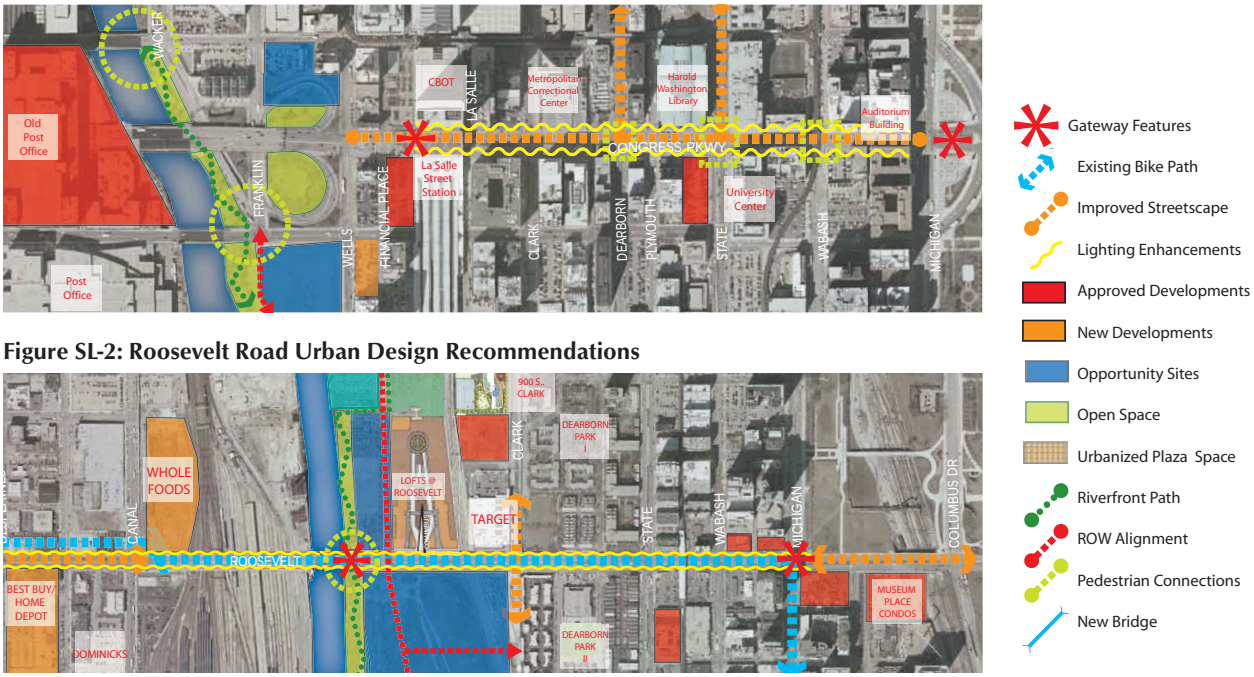


Figure SL-2: Roosevelt Road Urban Design Recommendations

SOUTH LOOP

Image SL-5: An existing busway through Grant Park will be utilized for express transit service along the Lakefront.

Image SL-6: The railscape through Grant Park will be enhanced visually.

South Loop Projects

(see project map below)

1. Grant Park and Central Station Railscape

Railscape improvements beginning in Grant Park going south to Museum Park should be implemented to improve the visual character of the area and create more green space. Goal: Complete by 2016.

2. Lakefront Transitway

Using an existing, improved right-of-way traveling north-south through Grant Park, this transit service would provide a connection between McCormick Place and the Carroll Avenue Transitway in Streeterville. It would also connect at Monroe Street with the East-West Transitway. Goal: Complete by 2016.

3. CTA Station Modernization (Harrison - Red)

The station modernization program has improved numerous key stations in the Central Area. In the South Loop, station upgrades are scheduled for the Harrison Station (Red Line). Goal: Complete by 2012.

4. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

A new bicycle lane is planned along Wabash to connect into an existing lane along Roosevelt. Goal: Complete by 2020.

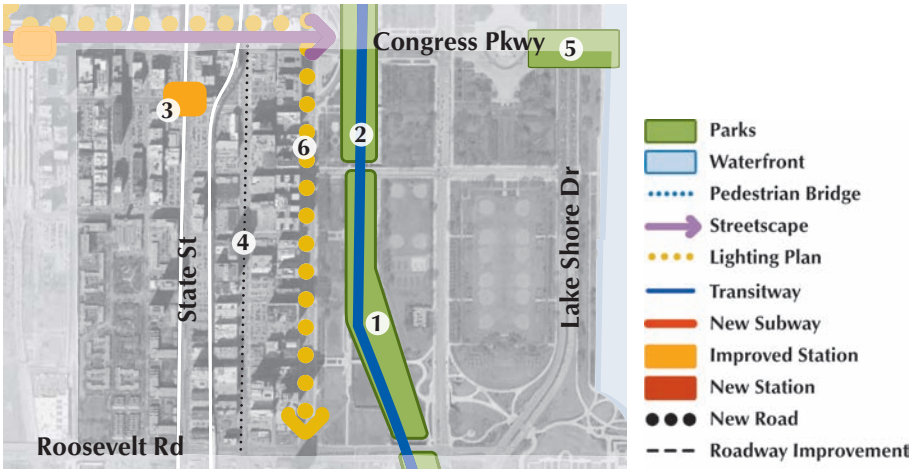
5. Pedestrian Connection at Queen's Landing

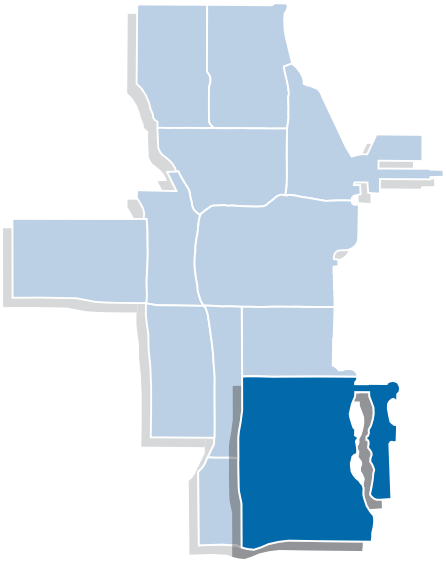
Pedestrian mobility between Buckingham Fountain and the Lake will be restored. An at-grade street crossing is preferred, although a more expensive alternative could be the construction of a grade separated underpass at this location. Goal: Complete by 2012.

6. Lighting Enhancement Projects

Michigan Avenue should receive top priority for streetscape and lighting enhancement funds and serve as the location for a pilot lighting enhancement project. Additional lighting enhancement projects should follow for Congress and LaSalle. Goal: Complete all by 2016

Figure SL-3: South Loop Project Map





Near South

Located at the south end of the Central Area, the Near South planning district is bounded on the north by Roosevelt Road, on the south by the Stevenson Expressway, on the east by Lake Michigan and on the west by Clark Street.

This area is characterized by residential, tourism/hospitality, cultural and open space uses. The eastern portion of the district contains Northerly Island, Soldier Field and the Museum Campus, including the Field Museum of Natural History, the Shedd Aquarium, and the Adler Planetarium. McCormick Place, one of the nation's largest and busiest convention centers is located in the southeast portion of the district.

NEAR SOUTH

Image NS-1: Perspectives Charter school has joined a number of new public and private school options for Central Area residents.

Image NS-2: Residential tower construction has been focused along Michigan Avenue east toward the Lakefront.

Image NS-3: The expansion of McCormick Place has substantially increased Chicago's convention and meeting capacity.

Trends, 2000-2007

Between 2000 and 2007 the Near South district experienced the largest residential growth of any Central Area district with the addition of over 7,300 households. As a result, the Near South currently contains the second largest concentration of households in the Central Area at 12.6%, after Near North. From a 2000 Census population of 8,030, Near South grew to an estimated population of 20,915 in 2007.

Development continued in Central Station, which encompasses 80 acres and reaches south almost to McCormick Place. New infill residential development occurred along Wabash, State, Michigan and Prairie. Helping to maintain diversity in the Near South, CHA's Hilliard Homes has been completely renovated.

A new Jewel grocery store opened in 2001, but, despite retail growth further west on Roosevelt Road, other new retail offerings have been limited to neighborhood-oriented restaurants and shops in new buildings.

The latest expansion of McCormick Place, McCormick Place West, opened in 2007 and substantially increases Chicago's convention and meeting capacity.

Forecast, 2008-2020

With many residential projects in the pipeline, the recent strong growth will continue. Lexington Park on Cermak will add 333 condominium units to the area. Ickes Homes (522 units) is currently providing apartments for residents who have moved from other CHA developments. Plans for this property's future are under consideration.

Columbia Collage will complete its Media Production Center located at 16th and State. New hotels, in addition to the McCormick Place Hyatt expansion and Imperial Hotel at 20th and Clark are also in planning.

Renovation of historic Motor Row supports a new entertainment district in the Near South. A large parcel at 16th and Clark is among the sites that could accommodate much needed neighborhood retail space.

2020 Vision/Goals

- Near South will continue to develop as a mixed-use urban neighborhood containing a diverse blend of residential, retail, commercial, recreational, and institutional uses.
- The Michigan-Wabash-State corridor will continue development of uses that include street-level retail.
- The Museum Campus will provide a regional residential amenity and tourist destination.
- As Motor Row becomes a distinctive retail and entertainment district, it can benefit from improved linkages to McCormick Place and Chinatown.
- The Cermak corridor will emerge as an important east-west connection anchored on the east by McCormick Place and hotels, and on the west by Chinatown and the Chicago River. Mid-density housing and mixed-use developments with ground-floor retail will locate along the corridor.
- New park space will be added to keep pace with the needs of a growing population.
- Transit access will be expanded with a new Green Line station and other transit service upgrades.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The Michigan/Cermak TIF, Calumet/Cermak TIF and portions of the River South, Near South and 24th/Michigan TIFs should help fund infrastructure improvements.
- Continued support by the City is needed for the fledgling entertainment district in Motor Row.

Development

- Consider a new public school to serve growing number of households.

Regulation

- The accessory parking policy in this district merits review; minimum residential parking ratios are not creating enough spaces. The loss of surface parking lots is also contributing to parking shortages or circulation problems.

NEAR SOUTH

Urban Design

McCormick Place/Central Station

Near South is being transformed with the development of large residential projects, conversion of warehouse buildings into condominiums, and opportunities associated with the recent opening of McCormick Place West. The future will include a new generation of development over the railroad air-rights facing the Lake, and new hospitality and commercial development along Cermak Road and in Motor Row.

New development should be oriented toward Cermak as opposed to the traditional development pattern that fronted buildings onto north-south streets. To the extent possible, new developments should incorporate adjacent lots to create larger sites suitable for taller buildings (see Figure NS-1).

Signature Street – Roosevelt Road

Roosevelt Road has changed as a regional shopping anchor. High levels of nearby residential and retail development are resulting in increased vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic within this corridor.

The visual character of Roosevelt is strong as the result of significant investment by the city in the bridge design and associated streetscape.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure NS-2 below):

- Focus on the pedestrian orientation of new development as well as pedestrian access from Roosevelt into development sites immediately north and south of the corridor.
- Wide sidewalks and bike lanes should be incorporated into each development scheme.

Signature Street – Cermak Road

Cermak exemplifies the important but identity-challenged east-west streets in the Central Area. It connects the lakefront, McCormick Place, Motor Row, and Chinatown.

Recent streetscape enhancements have improved the visual appeal of this corridor, but additional urban design recommendations include (see Figure NS-3 below):

- New buildings should be oriented is towards Cermak in order to establish a pleasant streetwall for pedestrians.
- Cermak should tie into the charming scale of development and mix of entertainment uses concentrated in Motor Row and Chinatown, as well as areas immediately north along Wabash.

Figure NS-1: McCormick Place

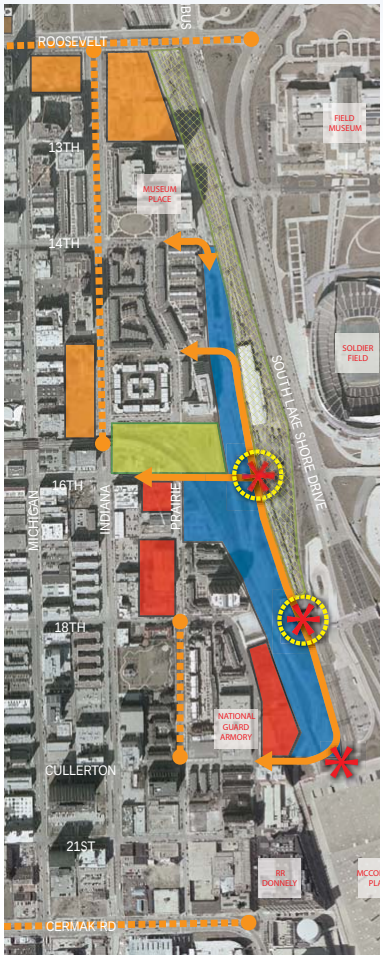


Figure NS-2: Roosevelt Road Urban Design Recommendations

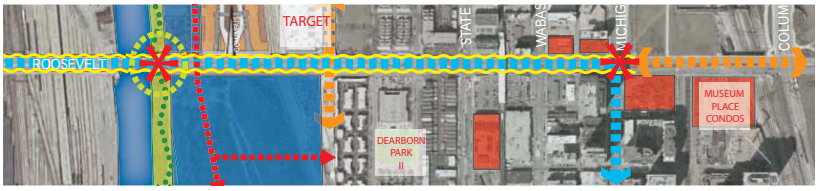
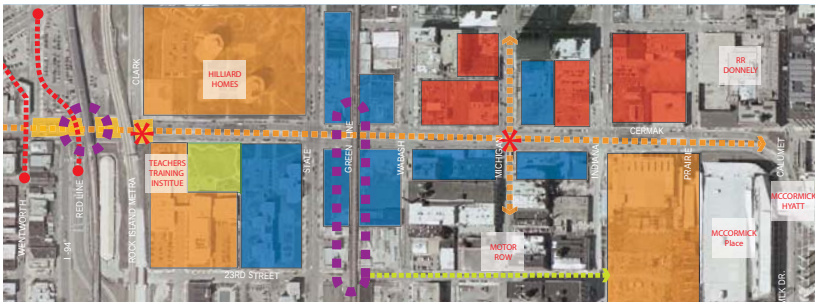


Figure NS-3: Cermak Road Urban Design Recommendations



NEAR SOUTH

Image NS-4: The existing railscape south of Roosevelt will be improved visually.

Image NS-5: Northerly Island will be improved as an "outdoor museum" for conservation.

Image NS-6: An existing busway through Grant Park will be utilized for express transit service along the Lakefront.

Near South Projects

(see project map below)

1. Central Station Railscape

Railscape improvements that begin in Grant Park and extend south to the Museum Campus should be implemented to improve the visual character of the area and create more green space. Goal: Complete by 2016.

2. Lakefront Transitway

Using an existing, improved right-of-way that travels north-south through Grant Park, this transit service would provide a connection between McCormick Place and the Carroll Avenue Transitway in Streeterville. It would also connect at Monroe Street with the East-West Transitway. Goal: Complete by 2016.

3. Northerly Island Park Improvements

The design and construction of Northerly Island will be completed. This amenity will serve residents of the Near South area, which is in need of open space, as well as visitors from the City and Region. Design and construction plans, which have not been finalized, envision the park as an "outdoor museum" for environmental conservation and sustainable design. Goal: Complete by 2012.

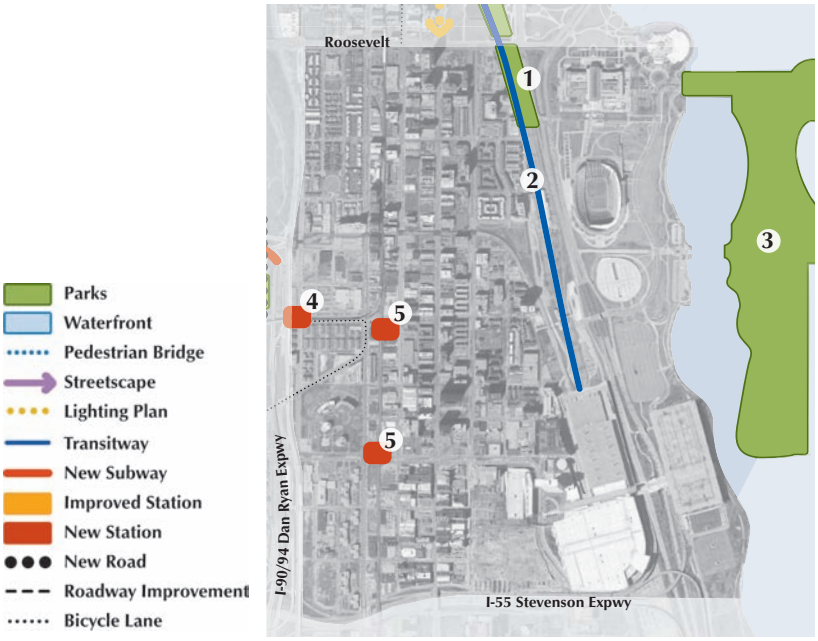
4. CTA Infill Station (Clark/18th - Orange Line)

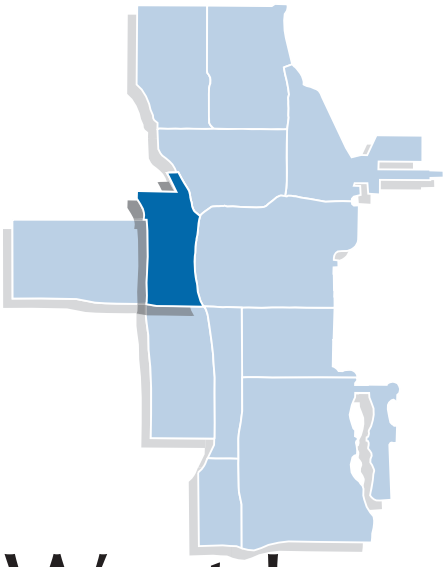
An infill station on the elevated Orange Line tracks would improve access to the Central Loop and Midway Airport from the Near South and Chinatown. Currently, Orange Line stations are located more than two miles apart at Roosevelt and Halsted. This station may also be an element of the CTA Circle Line project. Goal: Complete by 2020.

5. CTA Infill Station (Cermak or 18th - Green Line)

An infill Green Line station is needed at Cermak. Currently, Green Line stations are located nearly three miles apart at Roosevelt and again at 35th Street-IIT. Goal: Complete by 2016.

Figure NS-3: Near South Project Map





West Loop

Located between the Central Loop and Near West, the West Loop is bounded on the north mainly by Kinzie Street, on the south by Congress Parkway, on the east by the South Branch of the Chicago River, and on the west by the Kennedy Expressway.

The West Loop includes a portion of the core office market area as well as residential buildings and supporting retail uses. Union Station and Ogilvie Transportation Center have made the West Loop a gateway to Chicago for tourists, suburban commuters and other visitors.

WEST LOOP

Image WL-1: A West Loop condominium conversion.

Image WL-2: The ABN/Amro Building at 540 West Madison was one of many new office structures in the West Loop.

Image WL-3: A redevelopment proposal for the Old Post Office would add hotel and office space.

Trends, 2000-2007

The West Loop's 2000 Census population of 4,884 grew to an estimated 9,196 by 2007, which represents about 6% of Central Area households.

The West Loop was the most active district for office development aside from the Central Loop. Between 2000 and 2007, over 3.9 million SF of office space was developed in the West Loop, nearly all of it directly west of the Chicago River. For example, a number of new office buildings were built in the 500 block of various West Loop streets: a building at 555 West Adams contains 480,000 SF, Quaker Oats moved to a new 425,000-SF headquarters at 555 West Monroe, ABN/Amro built a 1.3 million-SF property at 540 West Madison and CTA headquarters moved to a LEED-certified building at 567 West Lake Street.

Forecast, 2008-2020

An additional 3.5 million SF of new office space is currently proposed for the West Loop. Two of the proposed projects, the expansion of Union Station and the renovation of the Old Main Post Office, include plans for hotels and new office space. Seven sites identified as vacant or underutilized could support an additional 4.7 million SF of new office use.

A proposed retail project (Metra Market) at Ogilvie Transportation Center and a Jewel grocery store in the Kinzie Station planned development are bringing new stores and restaurants to serve residents, commuters and office workers in the West Loop.

2020 Vision/Goals

- The West Loop will continue to grow as an increasingly important location for office development, which is the engine for economic and employment growth in the Central Area.
- High development densities and a strong preference for job generating uses should accompany the substantial new investment in West Loop transportation projects.
- Clinton Street will become the focal corridor of this dense, walkable office core, with office development concentrated between Randolph and Jackson Streets.
- Residential areas such as the Fulton River district and the Jackson Loft district will maintain their distinctive character.
- The West Loop will strengthen its position as a transportation gateway into the Central Area, adding faster, more direct public transitway connections to other Central Area districts as well as increased Metra service into Ogilvie Transportation Center.
- The West Loop will feature an enhanced streetscape that improves the pedestrian environment for commuters, residents, visitors, and tourists.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The River West, Canal Street/Congress Expressway, LaSalle Central and Kinzie Industrial Corridor TIFs can help fund infrastructure and transit projects that benefit the West Loop.
- Local improvement districts could be established to support neighborhood activities and selected capital projects.

Regulatory

- High-density office buildings with complementary commercial uses should be encouraged as the highest and best economic use for development sites in the West Loop.
- The Downtown Core zoning category, which covers a portion of the West Loop, should designate residential uses as a Special Use and increase the minimum lot area (MLA) for residential uses.

Development

- Integrate open space and Riverwalk enhancements in development projects along the Chicago River.

WEST LOOP

Urban Design

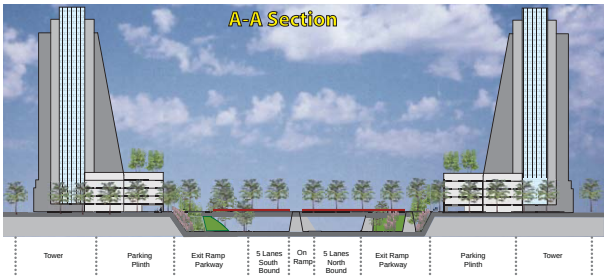
Kennedy Corridor

The area along the Kennedy Expressway from Van Buren to Lake Street was studied in order to identify opportunities for pedestrian and vehicular mobility improvements, development considerations for expressway adjacent parcels and potentials for park development.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure WL-1 and Figure WL-2 below):

- Pedestrian safety and comfort enhancements are recommended for the sidewalks along the bridges that span the expressway. Sidewalk widths can be expanded utilizing a cantilever system on existing piers. An expanded sidewalk would provide space for planters with trees or other landscape material to serve as a buffer between pedestrians and automobiles (see discussion of streetscape improvements under West Loop Projects).
- Pedestrian crossing of ramp intersections is a key safety concern. Improvements in crosswalk striping and utilization of an audible warning system were identified as features warranting further study.
- Landscape enhancements have been installed in several areas along the expressway, particularly at on- and off-ramp locations. This program should be continued and expanded.
- Regarding development along expressway adjacent parcels, a rational massing strategy has identified. Recommendations include utilization of parking plinths to establish regulating lines along the corridor and step-backs in building mass to frame the corridor.

Figure WL-1: Kennedy Corridor Section Detail



West Loop Projects

(see project map, following page)

1. Carroll Avenue Transitway

This new transit corridor would connect the West Loop with River North and Streeterville via a dedicated east-west right-of-way at the north edge of the Chicago River. In the West Loop, the service would operate in the dedicated right-of-way north of Lake Street, and use Clinton and Canal to access Union Station and Ogilvie Transportation Center. Goal: Complete by 2012.

2. Clinton Transitway

An extension of the dedicated transit corridor used by the Carroll Avenue Transitway, the Clinton Transitway would create a below-grade transit right-of-way from Lake Street to Jackson Street. Goal: Complete by 2012.

3. East-West Transitway

An east-west rapid transit route through the Central Loop beneath Monroe Street will connect the West Loop and its commuter rail stations with the Central Loop and lakefront amenities. Goal: Complete by 2016.

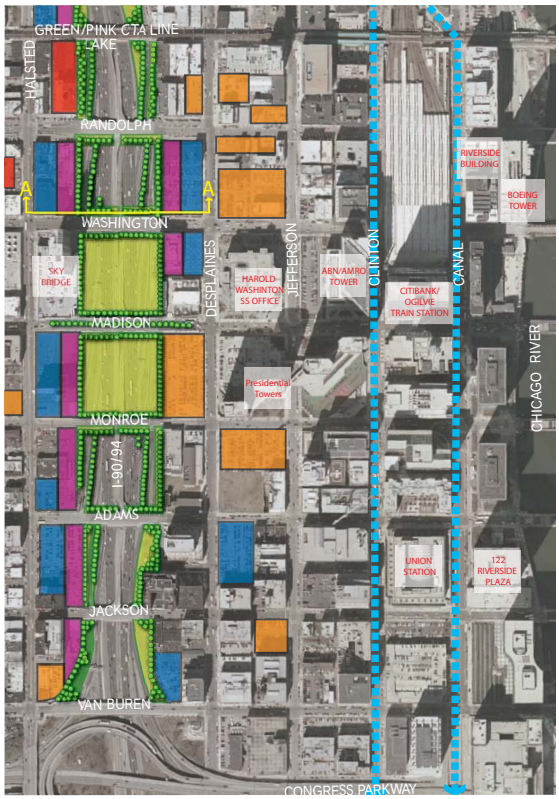
4. West Loop/Union Station Area Streetscape

The area around Union Station and Ogilvie Transportation Center has heavy foot traffic and demands a pedestrian-friendly environment. A comprehensive streetscape project on adjacent streets, particularly Clinton and Canal and their intersecting east-west streets from Randolph to Jackson, would add street plantings, crosswalks, lighting and wayfinding signage. Goal: Complete by 2016.

5. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

Bicycle lanes are planned for Washington, Madison and Adams, complementing the existing bicycle lanes along Clinton and Canal. Goal: Complete by 2020.

Figure WL-2: Kennedy Corridor Urban Design



WEST LOOP

Image WL-4: A series of investments will improve Union Station access and passenger facilities, as well as the ability to transfer between transit services.

Image WL-5: West Loop Transportation Center will connect the commuter rail, CTA rail, and bus services that converge in the West Loop.

Image WL-6: The Riverfront system will be improved with additional connections north and south.

6. Union Station Upgrades

Union Station improvement needs include enhanced access points and upgraded passenger amenities and platforms. An intermodal transfer center will move buses and taxis off the street and ease congestion. Amtrak also plans to improve and expand its passenger waiting areas. Goal: Complete by 2012.

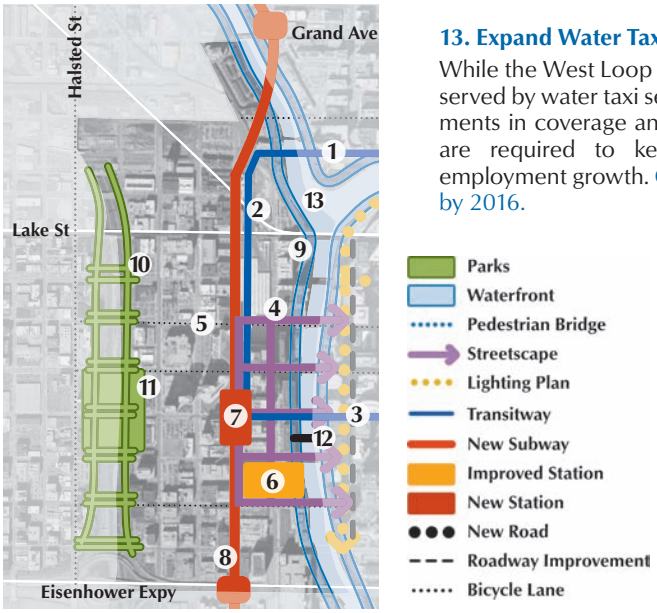
7. West Loop Transportation Center

The creation of a below-grade intermodal center beneath Clinton Street would connect future service corridors such as the Clinton Subway and Transitway with existing assets such as Union Station and Ogilvie Transportation Center. Goal: Complete by 2016.

8. Clinton Subway

In the West Loop, the Clinton Street Subway will be generally located beneath Clinton Street, with potential stations located at Congress and Monroe. The Monroe station would be part of the multi-level West Loop Transportation Center. Goal: Complete by 2020.

Figure WL-3: West Loop Project Map



9. South Branch Riverfront

In the West Loop, portions of the continuous Riverwalk exist at street level, but additional sections must be completed. Goal: Complete by 2016.

10. Kennedy Corridor Enhancements

Multi-phased I-90/94 Kennedy Corridor enhancements are proposed along the east/west corridors that connect the West Loop to the Near West subdistricts. Improvements include pedestrian safety and comfort features on the east/west road segments that cross the Expressway and the addition of trees and landscape features along the ramp infrastructure. Goal: Complete by 2012.

11. Kennedy Corridor Cap

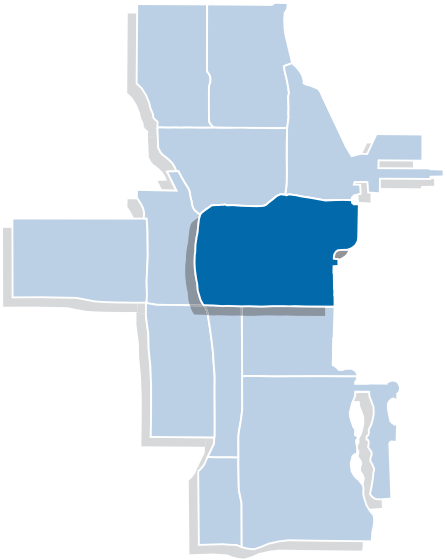
The creation of a major public park over the Kennedy Expressway is proposed for the area between Monroe and Washington Streets. This cap would provide much-needed green space to serve office and adjacent residential development and would provide improved linage between the West Loop and Near West subdistricts. Goal: Complete by 2020.

12. Pedestrian Bridge over River

A dedicated pedestrian bridge connecting the West Loop to the Central Loop (over the Chicago River) would ease pedestrian congestion on the streets. Goal: Complete by 2020.

13. Expand Water Taxi Service

While the West Loop is currently well served by water taxi service, improvements in coverage and service levels are required to keep pace with employment growth. Goal: Complete by 2016.



Central Loop

The Central Loop is located in the heart of the Central Area and is bounded on the north by the Chicago River, on the south by Congress Parkway, on the east by Lake Michigan, and on the west by the South Branch of the Chicago River.

The Central Loop is the economic engine for the Central Area, containing the core office market along with retail, hospitality/entertainment, institutional, and residential uses. The western half contains the major portion of the core office submarket. The eastern portion of the Central Loop is anchored by Millennium Park, Grant Park and historic Michigan Avenue. Between the two is the State Street retail corridor and the LaSalle Street financial district.

CENTRAL LOOP

Image CL-1: The south Wacker Drive Corridor has become the premier location for new office development.

Image CL-2: Grant Park and the lakefront harbors are enduring trademarks of the City.

Image CL-3: The Heritage at 130 N Garland overlooks Millennium Park, and is one example of the trend toward residential uses in the eastern areas of the Loop.

Trends, 2000-2007

The Central Loop added 7.2 million SF to its office inventory between 2000 and 2007, with an additional 3 million SF under construction and planned. Wacker Drive solidified its position as a premier office address, with additions including the Hyatt Center, UBS Tower, 151 North Wacker, 191 North Wacker, and 111 South Wacker.

Millennium Park was completed in 2004 and has had an enormous stimulating impact on the residential and hotel development sectors. While the Central Loop contained about 6.7% of Central Area households in 2000, virtually all lived in the portion of the Central Loop that is east of Michigan Avenue. The number of households doubled from 4,455 in 2000 to 9,091 in 2007. The 356-unit Heritage and the 355-unit Legacy led the new construction growth sparked by Millennium Park.

With Millennium Park drawing over 3.5 million visitors annually, the Central Loop captured roughly 30% of new hotel development activity in the Central Area between 2000 and 2007, including two major adaptive-use projects: the 385-room Hard Rock Hotel and the 128-room Hampton Inn at the renovated Bank of America Theater.

Development on North State Street included student housing for the School of the Art Institute, new retail space, and the Gene Siskel Film Center. The Theater District expanded with the addition of the new Goodman Theater, the Joffrey Center at State and Randolph, and the renovation of the former Schubert Theater, which became the Bank of America Theater. The State Street Corridor attracted new retailers and saw the return of Sears department store at State and Madison.

Forecast, 2008-2020

Ten Central Loop sites identified as vacant or underutilized could support nearly 9 million SF of new office space. With the expansion of the Federal Campus onto State, another 1.5 million SF will be added and both public- and private-sector employment will increase.

The upcoming completion of 108 North State (Block 37) with 400,000 SF of retail, restaurant, and entertainment, along with the re-tenanting of the historic Carson Pirie Scott building, will boost State Street retail.

The Wit Hotel at State and Lake is currently under construction, and several other hotel projects are planned or proposed for the Central Loop, including adaptive re-use projects in vintage properties on South LaSalle Street. The Children's Museum proposes to relocate from Navy Pier to a site at the north end of Grant Park, and the Art Institute is expanding with a new 265,000-SF wing, adding attractions adjacent to Millennium Park.

Several new residential towers were completed or are in development in the 28-acre, 4,950-unit Lakeshore East planned development. A new public park, public school and on-site retail center are also among the existing and planned amenities.

While new residential buildings are under construction or planned, additions to the supply will slow until economic recovery occurs.

CENTRAL LOOP

2020 Vision/Goals

- The Central Loop is the economic center of the Central Area, the City, and the entire metropolitan region. To continue to thrive, it requires a dense walkable office core that is well served by a reliable, high-capacity transit system that prioritizes use of public transportation.
- Newer office development will be concentrated along Wacker Drive with most of the competitive inventory located west of Dearborn Street.
- LaSalle Street will continue to function as a prime corridor for financial services, and its vintage buildings will provide opportunities for renovation and adaptive -reuse developments.
- A merged Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT) and Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) will be headquartered at LaSalle Street and Jackson Boulevard and will encourage reinvestment along Jackson and Van Buren in the southern portion of the Central Loop.
- Residential development will continue, as older buildings are recycled, infill sites are identified and Lakeshore East completes its build out. Access to and views of Millennium and Grant Parks will be the amenities that draw developers and residents.
- Higher education institutions will continue to add facilities, students and programs that build upon an already strong presence in the Central Loop.
- The three-block section of Michigan Avenue from Randolph to the Chicago River has little identity, despite its important role as a connection between the vibrant Magnificent Mile and Millennium Park. The City should give further considerations to recent recommendations for invigorating this vital link from a technical assistance panel of the district council of the Urban Land Institute.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The LaSalle Central TIF that was established in 2006 ties together older, existing TIF districts, providing an important funding tool for building renovations, transit projects, and street improvements.
- Special Service Areas can supplement other sources of funds for activities, services and select capital projects. Central Loop contains Special Service Area #1 along State Street, which extends between East Wacker Drive and Congress Parkway and is serviced by The Chicago Loop Alliance.

Regulatory

- The portion of the Central Loop zoned Downtown Core provides floor area ratios (FARs) that appropriately encourage the highest densities in the Central Area.
- The Downtown Core zoning category should be revised to emphasize preference for employment-generating uses over residential uses by designating residential as a Special Use and by increasing the minimum lot area (MLA) for residential uses.
- Historic preservation designations in the Central Loop should be used judiciously to balance redevelopment and renovation, particularly in the LaSalle Street corridor.

Development

- While high-density office development should be concentrated west of Dearborn, the area east of Dearborn should continue to be a vibrant mix of institutional, residential, hotel, entertainment and retail uses.
- Recycling older office buildings for small office users, hotels and residences should be encouraged.
- Development of new higher educational facilities, including student activity centers, classrooms, dormitories and administrative offices, should be supported and assisted as needed.

Urban Design

Image CL-4: Millennium Park draws more than 3.5 million visitors each year to see its attractions.

Image CL-5: The Lakeshore East residential area surrounds a major new park space.

Image CL-6: Millennium Station replaced the old Randolph Station as the terminal of the Metra Electric and South Shore lines.

CENTRAL LOOP

Image CL-7: The bicycle station and rental facility at Millennium Park is accessible from upper Randolph.

Image CL-8: The Randolph corridor frames Grant and Millennium Parks and connects the Lakefront with the rest of the Central Loop.

Signature Street – East Randolph

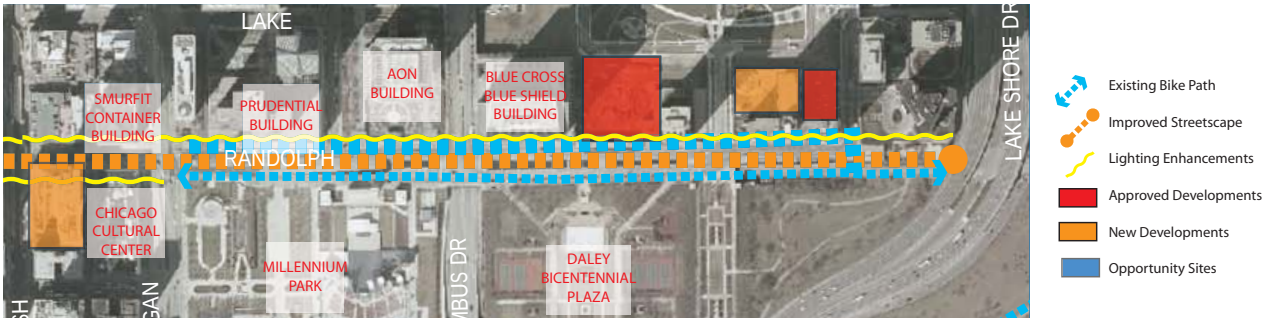
Randolph Street east of Michigan Avenue is a major connection between Lake Shore Drive and the Central Loop and should be improved. The visibility of this street and its arterial transportation role within downtown has been elevated by the development of Millennium Park and adjacent office and residential towers. With its drop-off function for Harris Theater and the proposed Children's Museum further east, pedestrian use of Randolph Street is significant and on the rise.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure CL-1 below):

- Streetscape improvements are needed to improve the safety and appearance of this high visibility corridor (see specific Streetscape recommendations under Central Loop Projects).
- A pedestrian ramp is proposed on the south side of Randolph to establish pedestrian access from the elevated section of East Randolph to the ground at Lake Shore Drive This connection would bridge a disconnect between development north of Randolph and access to Millennium Park, Grant Park and the Lakefront.

Signature Street – Congress

Figure CL-1: East Randolph Urban Design Recommendations



CENTRAL LOOP

Parkway

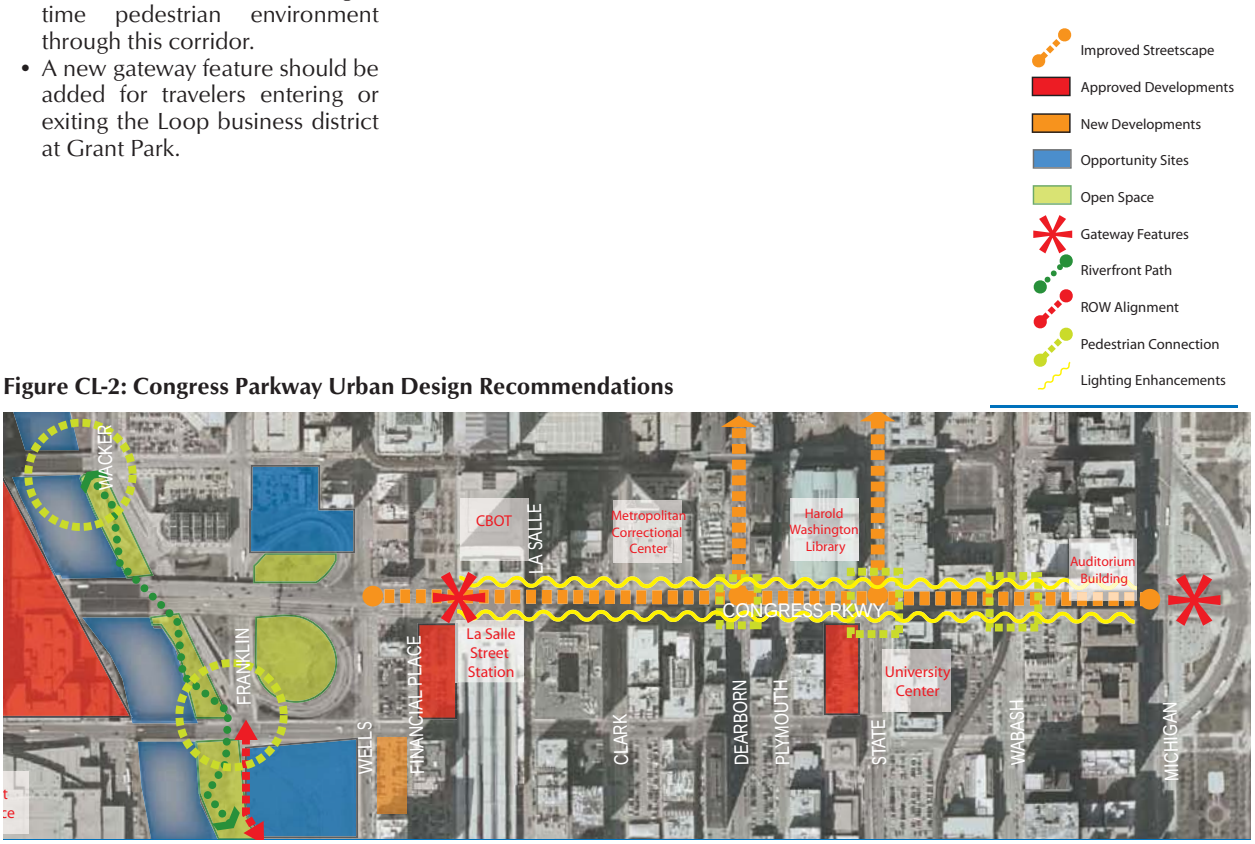
The role and function of Congress Parkway is changing due to the development of student housing at University Center, high levels of market rate residential development in adjacent areas of the South Loop, and expanding office functions in the area associated with the financial industry and government services. Congress Parkway needs to be upgraded to accommodate high levels of pedestrian mobility while also maintaining its role as a key east/west vehicular arterial. Development proposals for areas immediately south of Congress along the Chicago River will further increase pedestrian traffic.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure CL-2 below):

- Congress Parkway streetscape enhancements should include strategies to buffer pedestrians from vehicular traffic and provide safer intersection crossing conditions.
- Specialized lighting improvements should enhance the nighttime pedestrian environment through this corridor.
- A new gateway feature should be added for travelers entering or exiting the Loop business district at Grant Park.

Image CL-9: The new University Center has increased pedestrian activity along Congress Parkway.

Figure CL-2: Congress Parkway Urban Design Recommendations



CENTRAL LOOP

Image CL-10: The East-West Transitway beneath Monroe would allow for faster trips across the Central Loop.

Image CL-11: The Washington-Wabash Elevated station would replace two existing stations.

Image CL-12: A lighting enhancement project along Michigan Avenue will highlight the wall of buildings that frame Grant Park.

Central Loop Projects

(see project map below right)

1. East-West Transitway

This east-west rapid transit route through the Central Loop beneath Monroe Street will enhance access between the West Loop Metra terminals and the employment, entertainment, educational and residential uses throughout the Central Loop. The service will also connect to the Lakefront parks and the planned Lakefront Transitway. Implementation goal: Complete by 2016.

2. CTA Station Modernization

The station modernization program has improved numerous aged stations in the Central Loop. Additional subway and elevated stations in the Central Loop are planned for improvements under this program:

- Madison/Monroe (Red)
- Washington/Dearborn (Blue)
- Washington/Wabash (Loop El)
- State/Lake (Loop Elevated)
- Monroe/Dearborn (Blue)
- LaSalle/Congress (Blue)

A new Washington/Wabash station is envisioned to replace the two existing elevated Loop stations at Randolph and Madison. If possible, funding for both elevated and subway station upgrades should be accelerated. Goal: Complete all by 2020.

3. East Randolph Streetscape

A comprehensive streetscape program is needed to enhance the visual character of Randolph Street east of Michigan Avenue. Enhancement recommendations include establishment of wider sidewalks, new street lighting, landscape, and wayfinding signage (particularly connecting the Loop to Millennium and Grant Parks). Goal: Complete all by 2012.

4. Congress Parkway Streetscape

The streetscape project on Congress (currently being designed) will improve the pedestrian environment in the important east-west thoroughfare along the south edge of the Central Loop. Congress connects Grant Park, a concentration of universities, new residential developments in the vicinity and Metra's LaSalle Street Station. Streetscape elements include trees, planted medians, new lighting fixtures, improved crosswalks and specialized light displays. Goal: Complete by 2012.

5. Wacker Drive Reconstruction

The reconstruction of the north/south segment of Wacker Drive south of Lake Street would improve traffic operations, pedestrian amenities, and aesthetics in an active office development corridor. This project would continue the work completed along the east-west section of Wacker Drive, which added amenities along the Chicago Riverfront. Goal: Complete all by 2012.

6. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

New bicycle lanes are planned for Washington and Madison to complement the existing bicycle lane along Upper Randolph near Millennium Park. Goal: Complete by 2020.

7. Lighting Enhancements

Michigan Avenue should receive top priority for streetscape and lighting enhancement funds and serve as the location for a pilot lighting enhancement project. Additional lighting enhancement projects should follow for key Central Loop corridors including Randolph, Congress Wacker and LaSalle. Goal: Complete by 2016

8. Main Branch & South Branch Riverfront

Riverwalk improvements are envisioned to include a permanent public market (Hyatt area), underbridge connections at Michigan Avenue and Lake Shore Drive, several on-street connections, a dock level riverwalk, green space, and a vertical connection near Van Buren Street. Goal: Complete all by 2016.

CENTRAL LOOP

9. Grant Park & Central Station Railscape

Railscape improvements beginning in Grant Park going south to Museum Park would enhance the visual character of the area and create new park space near Roosevelt. Goal: Complete by 2016.

10. Lakefront Transitway

The Lakefront Transitway would use an existing, improved right-of-way traveling north-south through Grant Park. This transit service would provide a connection to McCormick Place on the south and the Carroll Avenue Transitway on the north. In the Central Loop, the service would provide stops at major streets and connect with the East/West Transitway at Monroe Street. Goal: Complete by 2016.

11. Expand Water Taxi Service

The Central Loop is currently well served by water taxi service, but improvements in coverage and service levels will be needed to support new development activity. Service options from the Central Loop will be expanded along the North and South Branches as developments are added along the River. Goal: Complete by 2016.

12. Pedestrian Bridges over River

Dedicated pedestrian bridges connecting the West Loop to the Central Loop and the Central Loop to Streeterville (over the Chicago River) would ease pedestrian congestion at key points in the area. Goal: Complete by 2020.

13. Pedestrian Connection at Queen's Landing

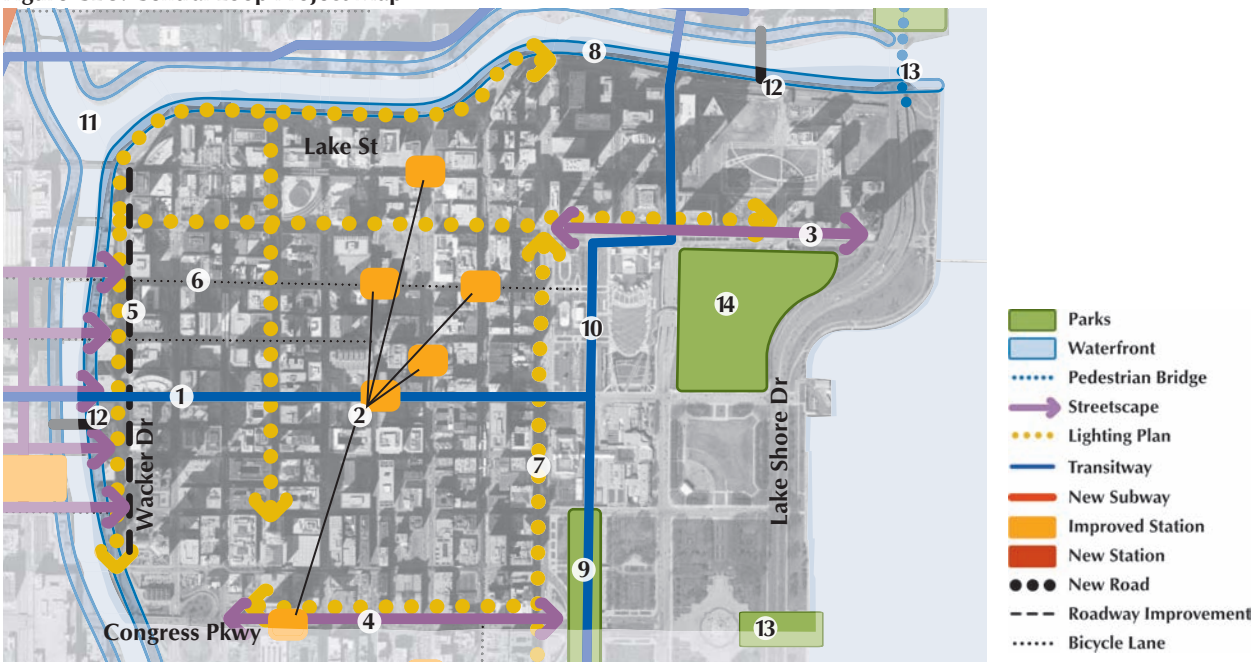
Pedestrian mobility between Buckingham Fountain and the Lake will be restored. An at-grade street crossing is preferred, although a more expensive alternative could be the construction of a grade separated underpass at this location. Goal: Complete by 2012.

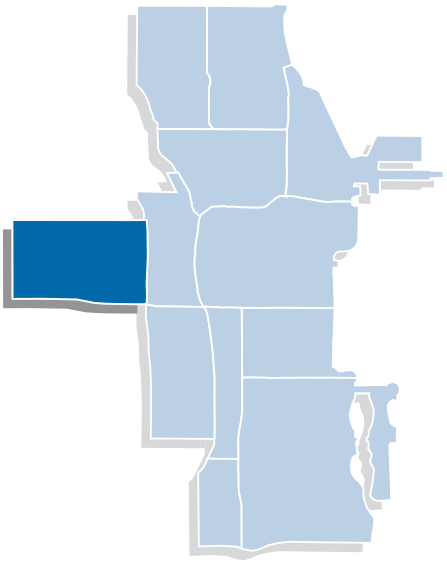
14. Grant Park Improvements North

While the exact scope of this project has not yet been determined, the project will generally include reconstruction of the obsolete Monroe Street Garage and other public amenities associated with the garage structure. Open spaces and park facilities potentially effected by this project include Daley Bicentennial Plaza/Fieldhouse, Cancer Survivors Garden and "Peanut Park." Goal: Complete by 2012.

Image CL-13: Buckingham Fountain is an important Lakefront landmark, and pedestrian access across Lake Shore Drive will be restored.

Figure CL-3: Central Loop Project Map





Near West

Near West is bounded on the north by Lake Street, on the south by the Eisenhower Expressway, on the east by the Kennedy Expressway and on the west by Ashland Avenue. It represents an expansion of the original 2003 Central Area Plan boundaries westward to capture the significant levels of new growth.

Originally an industrial and warehouse district, the Near West now contains a mix of established residential neighborhoods alongside commercial and industrial uses. Two important restaurant districts are located at the eastern and northern edges of the subdistrict: Greektown located along Halsted and "Restaurant Row" along Randolph. The United Center, the city's largest indoor athletic and performance venue, lies just beyond the western boundary

NEAR WEST

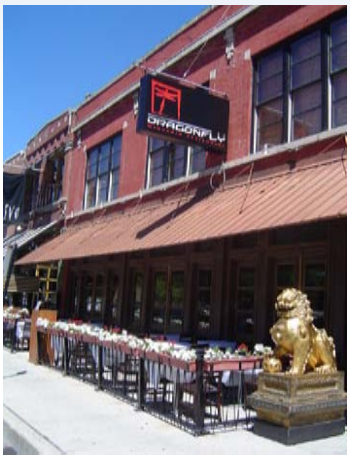


Image NW-1: The Randolph corridor through the Near West has grown as a popular restaurant district.

Image NW-2: The Near West has recently experienced a surge in mid-rise condominium development.

Image NW-3: Planted medians have improved the street environment along Randolph.

Trends, 2000-2007

The Near West's 2000 population of 4,560 more than doubled by 2007 and reached an estimated 10,175 persons (6.1% of the Central Area's total population). New construction projects have followed pioneering adaptive-reuse residential projects.

While high-rise projects have been constructed along the Kennedy Expressway and Halsted Street, much of the Near West development has been in low-and mid-rise buildings.

New retail development, including a Dominick's Foods store in Greektown, supports the influx of residents.

Forecast, 2008-2020

With few remaining properties that have potential for residential adaptive-reuse, new residential development is occurring primarily on redevelopment sites. The 212-unit Emerald, for example, was recently built on the former site of the Chicago Christian Industrial League, which relocated to new facilities.

Larger Near West projects include VB1224, with 189 adaptive-reuse units, and 901 West Madison, with 148 new-construction units.

Increased demand for housing from the adjacent University of Illinois at Chicago campus and the Illinois Medical District is being met in the Near West with the 142-unit Automatic Lofts targeted to students and a wide range of other proposed residential projects. A retail project that includes a movie theater is proposed for the former Fannie May Candies factory site at 1137 West Jackson.

A new park at Adams and Sangamon Streets is in the design phase. It will address the need for additional recreation and open space.

2020 Vision/Goals

- In the Near West subdistrict, new development will step down in density from the high-density corridors in the West Loop along the Kennedy and Eisenhower expressways. Densities will be higher in the transition areas along Halsted and Van Buren Streets.
- The interior portions of the subdistrict around Madison Street will be medium density and therefore consistent with the area's loft character.
- This district will continue to grow as a community of linked and distinct urban neighborhoods.
- New mixed-use developments will strengthen Madison Street and Halsted Street as the community's retail corridors serving the neighborhood as well as attracting City residents to its unique restaurants and shops.
- Existing industrial properties should be protected, although appropriate transitions to new uses should be allowed.
- The southwest portion of the Near West district around the University of Illinois at Chicago will remain a suitable location for institutional development.
- Public transportation offerings in the district will be improved to include new rail station(s) along existing lines and faster, more direct bus service into the West Loop and Central Loop.
- Pedestrian mobility to the West Loop will be enhanced through targeted improvements to the sidewalk environment of the streets that cross the Kennedy Expressway.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- Central West and Near West TIF Districts will provide funding for Near West infrastructure.
- The Greektown Special Service Area (SSA) along Halsted Street should continue to fund sidewalk maintenance and other local projects and activities.

Regulatory

- Current C-zoning has brought ground-level retail but has not encouraged the emergence of a strong retail corridor. Halsted Street has sufficient residential density to support more retail space but flexibility may be needed on other streets.
- Densities should respect and

NEAR WEST

reflect the current character of the district, with taller buildings located on the east side of the district closer to the Kennedy Expressway and West Loop.
- Industrial retention policies should support existing businesses, although a Planned Manufacturing District (PMD) is not necessary.

Urban Design

Kennedy Corridor

The area along the Kennedy Expressway from Van Buren to Lake Street was studied in order to identify opportunities for pedestrian and vehicular mobility improvements, development considerations for expressway adjacent parcels and potentials for park development.

Urban design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure NW-1 and Figure NW-2):

- Pedestrian safety and comfort enhancements are recommended for the sidewalks along the bridges that span the expressway. Sidewalk widths can be expanded utilizing a cantilever system on existing piers. An expanded sidewalk would provide space for planters with trees or other landscape material to serve as a buffer between pedestrians and automobiles (see discussion of streetscape improvements under Near West Projects).
- Pedestrian crossing of ramp intersections is a key safety concern. Improvements in crosswalk striping and utilization of an audible warning system are potential features warranting further study.
- Landscape enhancements have been installed in several areas along the expressway, particularly at access ramp locations. This program should be continued and expanded.
- Regarding development, a rational massing strategy is identified that would provide visual continuity to expressway adjacent parcels. Recommendations include utilization of parking decks to establish regulating lines along the corridor and step-backs in building mass to frame the corridor.

Near West

The Near West subdistrict is one of the high growth areas within the Central Area. Development has consisted primarily of residential construction in mid-rise buildings and conversion of loft buildings. The Skybridge project is the first high-rise structure west of the Kennedy Expressway in the Central Area.

Image NW-4: The Skybridge development is the first skyscraper to be constructed west of the Kennedy Corridor.

Figure NW-2: Kennedy Corridor Urban Design Recommendations

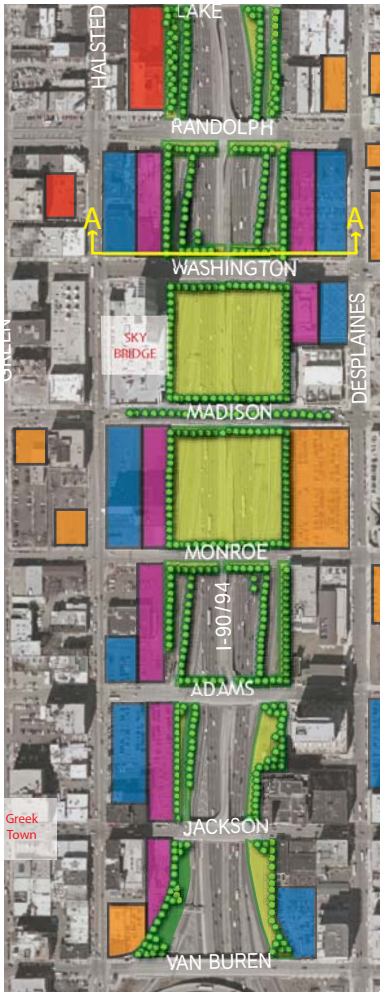


Figure NW-1: Kennedy Corridor Section Detail

NEAR WEST

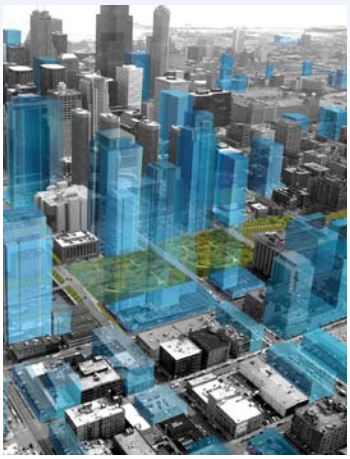


Image NW-5: The capping of the Kennedy Expressway would potentially provide needed open space for the Near West.

Image NW-6: The existing elevated tracks at Lake and Morgan have been identified as the site of a new CTA station.

A mix of office and residential projects are being proposed for the area close to Halsted Street. It is anticipated that taller buildings will be proposed for the subdistrict along the Kennedy Expressway. Taller buildings may also be appropriate on sites along the Eisenhower Expressway on the southern edge of the district and in the heart of the subdistrict as far west as Morgan where a new CTA green line station is proposed.

Near West Projects

(see project map below)

1. CTA Infill Station (Morgan - Green/Pink Line)

An infill station on the elevated Green/Pink Line tracks along Lake Street will improve transit access to and from the Near West, where stations are currently spaced more than one mile apart. Goal: Complete by 2012.

2. Kennedy Corridor Enhancements

Multi-phased I-90/94 Kennedy Corridor enhancements are proposed along the east/west corridors that connect the West Loop and Near West subdistricts. Improvements include pedestrian safety and comfort features and the addition of trees and landscape features along ramp infrastructure. Goal: Complete by 2012.

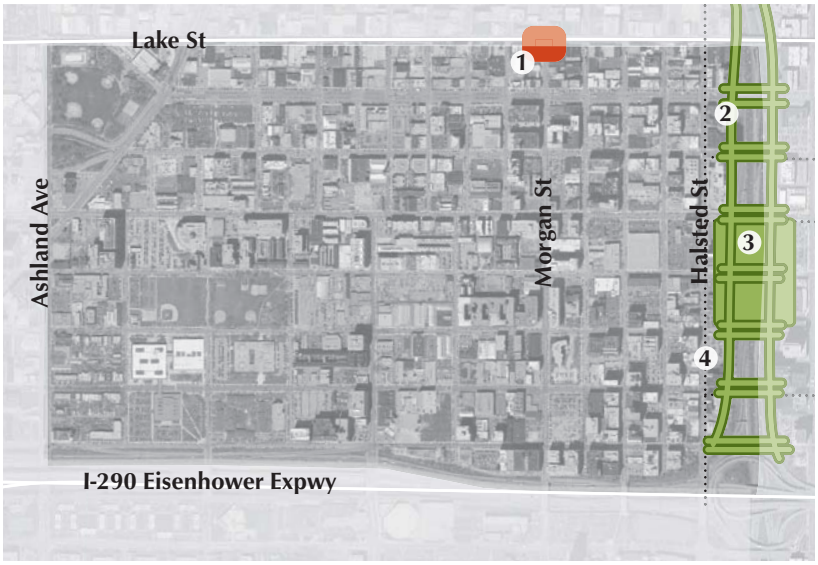
3. Kennedy Corridor Cap

The creation of a major public park over the Kennedy Expressway is proposed for the area between Monroe and Washington Streets. This cap would provide much needed green space to serve office and adjacent residential development, and it would provide improved linkage between the West Loop and Near West subdistricts. Goal: Complete by 2020.

4. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

A new bicycle lane is planned for Halsted and will complement the existing bicycle lanes along Washington and Jackson. Goal: Complete by 2020.

Figure NW-3: Near West Projects



ACTION PLAN PROJECT MAP

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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